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ABSTRACT

This monograph presents five papers which focus on the importance of computers and technology as tools for increasing the amount and the quality of adult counseling, especially in the area of adult learning. The first paper, "Excellence, Equality, and Education: A Future for Counseling," by H. B. Gelatt, discusses the compatibility of the concepts of equity and excellence, and proposes a new view of educational excellence and the counselor's role in bringing it about. "Caught in a Dilemma: Adults as Learners," by Nancy K. Schlossberg, addresses the problems of adult learners in traditional learning environments. "What an Ideal Counseling/Support Program for the Adult Learner Should Look Like," by Edwin L. Herr, delineates the basic components of a successful adult counseling program, focusing on content, processes, and the role of technology. "Comprehensive Counseling and Support Programs for Adult Learners: Challenge to Higher Education," by Ann Q. Lynch and Arthur W. Chickering, covers a broad range of topics related to adult learners, e.g., mental health, life cycle patterns, counseling programs, technology, and implications for counselors' professional development. The concluding paper by Garry R. Walz and Libby Benjamin, "Synthesis and a Look to the Future," draws together the main ideas from the preceding papers and proposes areas for future action and discussion by counseling professionals. (MCF)

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NEW PERSPECTIVES ON COUNSELING ADULT LEARNERS

H. B. Gelatt
Nancy K. Schlossberg
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CG 017658

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FOREWORD

Cynthia S. Johnson

This book is the result of a collaborative effort of Project LEARN of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, ERIC/CAPS, and a number of counseling professionals. The grant underwriting its creation is the largest award for educational purposes ever made by the Foundation, totaling $4,070,670.

Project LEARN is a major national effort supported by the Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning (CAEL). Its primary goal is to establish a national network of model adult learner services that embed technology.

Several significant trends in society and in our institutions of learning were the impetus for creating the Project:

- Adult learners are becoming the majority in our educational institutions.
- Institutions are not changing either to meet the needs of adults or to incorporate what has been learned about adults in the past three decades.
- Technology has made available new delivery methods to individualize learning.

The University of Maryland is one of 13 funded recipients of Project LEARN; it is responsible for the counselor training portion of the grant.

In August of 1983, a group of professionals met at Sylvan Birch, near Rhinelander, Wisconsin, to envision new and better approaches to counseling adult learners. Present at that meeting were Margaret Barr, American College Personnel Association (ACPA); Al Gallagher, American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD); H. B. Gelatt, H. B. McDaniel Foundation; Cynthia S. Johnson, Project LEARN; Carol Minor, National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA); Bob Nejedlo, Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES); K Richard Pyle, Project LEARN; Bruce Riesenberg, Project LEARN; James Sampson, Project LEARN; Margaret Talburtt, Formative Evaluation Research Associates; and Garry R. Walz, ERIC/CAPS. The group conceptualized a model in an attempt to create a new future for counseling adult learners.

This book represents the completion of the first stage of that model. As an initial step, several leading thinkers in the counseling field were asked to write

concept papers on their views of the future of counseling adult learners. They exchanged papers and were then brought together to react to each other's ideas. JoAnn Harris-Bowlsbey moderated the session. Garry Walz and Libby Benjamin Walz witnessed the dialogue and wrote the final paper, which synthesizes key portions of the discussion and suggests new perspectives for counseling adult learners. John Whiteley, film maker and editor of the Counseling Psychologist, made two videotapes of the authors' interactions (which are now available for rent or purchase). Libby Benjamin edited the papers, and ERIC/CAPS undertook the task of assembling and printing them in book form.

Planning is already underway for a second stage of this model: holding a national leadership conference on counseling adult learners, at which invited prominent professionals from within and without the profession will react to the concepts presented in this volume.

If you would like more information about the videotapes or wish to share reactions, please write:

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INTRODUCTION

Garry R. Walz

The perspective that we have on an event or a development is crucial in determining how we view the occurrence and how we are likely to respond. Many times when a trend or development has moved beyond an early impact stage to widespread adoption, we ask ourselves, "Why didn't I think of that?" or "Why was I so resistive when I first heard about that?" Implicit in our expressions is the wish that we had been exposed to divergent ideas that could have broadened and changed our own thinking.

This monograph, the result of the inspired efforts of Cynthia Johnson, is a cutting edge document. Five knowledgeable and active idea generators in the adult counseling sphere have shared their perspectives on present and future developments in counseling adult learners. The basic theme throughout their writing is the importance of computers and technology as a tool for increasing the amount of adult counseling and improving its quality. The papers are diverse. They are written from different perspectives. Each, however, has an important message. All of the chapters, we believe, fully deserve to be read, assimilated, and reflected upon, if not acted on.

In a concluding chapter, we have attempted to identify the major ideas that were presented by one or more of the authors. It is noteworthy that, writing independently of one another, the authors shared a good deal of basic agreement about the important concepts related to counseling adults. Their consensus strengthens these synthesizing ideas and nudges the reader to pay particular attention to them. Because closure is inimical to generativity and creativity, we have also identified what we believe to be some major concerns which the papers have not addressed or have only alluded to. Like the thrust of a dueler, these ideas are intended to pierce our complacency or overwillingness to accept final and complete answers about adult counseling. Stand not aside but rejoin and rethink your own perspective.

Our intention in collaborating with Cynthia Johnson and the counseling component of the Kellogg Project LEARN was to foster dialogue within people, between people, and among groups about where adult counseling has been and where it is going. It is the beginning of the beginning. We encourage you, the reader, to write the remaining chapters to this volume, both in your thinking and in your actions as an adult counselor. In many ways today, our education emphasizes endings and conclusions that, however well they might have suited an earlier time, no longer have real relevance. Leave for some unknown time in the future what the ending should be. Make this a sunrise rather than a sunset experience. As you read these words about new perspectives, celebrate what can become a new beginning for counseling adults.

EXCELLENCE, EQUALITY, AND EDUCATION: A FUTURE FOR COUNSELING

H. B. Gelatt

INTRODUCTION

We have all studied and followed the concepts of Theory X and Theory Y in management. Now we have Theory Z. This latest theory provides evidence that productivity may be dependent upon trust, subtlety and intimacy. We need this new management theory because, according to its author, "As a nation, we have developed a sense of the value of technology and of a scientific approach to it, but we have meanwhile taken people for granted" (Ouchi, 1981, p. 4).

This nation needs a new theory of Education, Theory E, for the same reason. Because at the same time that business and industry have been losing track of people in the wake of the technology explosion, education has been losing track of the learner. Schools, colleges and universities have forgotten the human side of learner development. We need a new kind of business management and a new kind of education to provide the balance John Naisbitt (1982) calls "high tech/high touch."

This paper could be called Theory E because a new kind of Education is discussed in an attempt to achieve Excellence and Equality. This new kind of education is called Educare. The main ingredient of this new education is Empathy (a capacity for sharing in the interests of another): appreciation, compassion, understanding, and sensitivity. Empathy, trust, subtlety and intimacy have always been part of the counseling tradition.

Theory E, like Theory Z, proposes nothing new. We have always known that the human side of industrial and technological development is important. And we probably even knew that trust, subtlety and intimacy were significant determinants of production. But we don't always do what we know. We don't often do the obvious. We look for magic.

Thomas Peters, in summarizing the findings of the search for a formula for excellent corporations, said this: "There is good news and bad news; the bad news is

there is no magic. The good news is there is no magic. What the excellent companies do is pay obsessive attention to the customer and to common sense." What education needs to do to be excellent is to pay obsessive attention to both the learner and to common sense!

Paying close attention to the learner, using empathy, understanding and sensitivity, and following our common sense about human growth and development, is not new or magic. It has been the basic doctrine of the counseling profession and one of the reasons counselors were introduced into schools. What is new about Theory E is that it demands that the values, goals and methods of the counseling profession become the basic doctrine (the common sense) of future education.

CAN WE BE EXCELLENT AND EQUAL TOO?

American business is searching for excellence. American education is demanding excellence, and American society is preaching equality. At the same time modern technology is changing our lives.

The question is: Can a modern, democratic, technological society preach and practice equality and pursue and produce excellence? An affirmative answer will first require some changes. These changes spell out a new role for the counseling profession.

VIVE LA DIFFÉRENCE!

Every man is, in certain respects
Like every other man,
Like some other men,
Like no other man.
(Kluckhohn & Murray, 1956, p. 53)

All men are not created equal. Neither are women or children. All students are not the same. Individual differences have been observed for a long time--among

men, women, children, students, teachers, parents, and even among chief executive officers. It is also one of the self-evident truths that good education increases individual differences. Excellent education, therefore, should not (or possibly cannot) produce equality. And equality education will not produce equal excellence.

Every person cannot be excellent, unless we broaden our definition of excellence. John Gardner (1961) was the first to ask the question about being equal and excellent. And he was asking about education in America. He also asked other important questions:

> What difficulties does a democracy encounter in pursuing excellence?
> How equal do we want to be?
> How equal can we be?
> Can an egalitarian society tolerate winners?
>
> (p. xi-xii)

There are two ways, Gardner points out, that a democracy deals with individual differences in ability and performance. One way is to work against such individual differences by "protecting the slow runners and curbing the swift." The other way is simply to "let the best man win" (p. 5). Public education in America, instead of choosing one way, is trying to do both. We are taking the path of egalitarianism and the path of competition at the same time. However, not many people seem to notice that the concepts of "All men are created equal" and "Let the best man win" are incompatible.

People are not equal either in their native gifts or in their motivations. It follows, then, that they will not be equal in their achievements. So America calls its social and educational philosophy <u>equality of opportunity</u>. "We may not all hit home runs," the saying goes, "but every person should have his/her chance at bat."

Looking at this metaphor more closely may give us a whole-brain view of the results of such a philosophy and provide some insights into future educational policy. Let's imagine a system where every person indeed is given an equal chance at bat, even an equal chance to learn how to bat. And let's imagine that some people do hit home runs. These people are then valued and rewarded. And the home run champions are regarded very highly, even considered excellent. Let's imagine

further that one of this system's highest values is home-run hitting. It is considered part of the "basics." People who learn how to run, catch, throw, bunt or pitch are not considered champions or excellent by the system even though those skills are highly useful in the real game. The system acknowledges that those skills are useful but recommends that they should be learned and rewarded somewhere else.

Equality of opportunity in American education means an equal chance for everyone to compete. But the competition is restricted to a narrow framework of skills. Rewards are given for a few kinds of successes. This system favors certain kinds of people with certain kinds of gifts. To paraphrase St. Paul's words, "we have gifts differing according to the grace that has been given us" (Eph. 4:7). The equal opportunity offered students today in American public schools favors those whose gifts match the current framework. Students may be offered an equal chance to compete, but the narrow definition of success or excellence and the wide individual differences among students may eliminate the equality. The answer to this dilemma is to change our goals from honoring only a limited area of achievement to honoring the achievement of each person's potential. We can then expect each student to strive for excellence in terms of the kind of excellence that is within his/her reach.

> We must learn to honor excellence (indeed to demand it) in every socially accepted human activity, however humble the activity, and to scorn shoddiness, however exalted the activity. An excellent plumber is infinitely more admirable than an incompetent philosopher. The society which scorns excellence in plumbing because plumbing is a humble activity and tolerates shoddiness in philosophy because it is an exalted activity will have neither good plumbing nor good philosophy. Neither its pipes or its theories will hold water.
>
> (Gardner, 1961, p. 86)

To seek the development of human potentialities at all levels is a basic tenet of both democracy and counseling. It is possible in a democracy to have excellence in education and, at the same time, to seek to educate everyone to the limit of his/her potential. It takes more than an educated elite to run a complex, technological society. It takes more than math, sciences and computer literacy to create an excellent Information Society.

Educating everyone up to the limit of his/her ability does not mean reducing standards. It means broadening the standards of excellence. Each society at a given

moment in history is apt to honor only a portion of the full range of excellence. Education in a democracy needs to foster a pervasive and almost universal striving for good performance. We want a country whose people are striving, who give proud attention to performance and achievement. To achieve this goal we need a conception of excellence that embraces many kinds at many levels, which may be applied to every degree of ability and to every socially acceptable activity. We need excellent philosophers, excellent plumbers, excellent scientists, excellent computer programmers, excellent artists, excellent mechanics, excellent teachers, excellent counselors, and excellent citizens. We need an educational system that fosters striving toward these kinds of excellence. "Men must have goals which, in their eyes, merit effort and commitment; and they must believe that their efforts will win them self-respect and the respect of others" (Gardner, 1961, p. 132).

An educational system that honors this kind of excellence will produce many more achievers. It will produce home-run hitters, pitchers, and runners. And a society that has that kind of educational system will be rewarded not only by those who achieve excellence but also by those who are striving.

EDUCARE, ENTER THE COUNSELOR

> What is honored in a society will be cultivated.
> (Socrates)

Today it is being said that public education in America needs to reform. In fact, almost everyone is saying it, and almost everyone has his/her own proposal for that reform. There is no lack of reformation ideas. More of the same is not needed. Most current proposals for reforming education are Industrial Society plans; they are short-range answers to immediate problems; they are band-aid, here-and-now solutions.

The future of education is unknown. It doesn't exist and it cannot be predicted. However, the future of education is being determined today. If we agree that a democratic Information Society needs to foster a pervasive and universal striving for excellence, and we are willing to embrace a broad definition of excel-

lence, then we get one view about what is needed to reform education for the future. However, if the purpose of reformation is to "beat the Japanese," or to train people for the occupational shortages, then we get a different view. Two important questions need to be asked about determining the future of education: What is its purpose, and will it be determined with present-oriented Industrial Society thinking or future-oriented Information Society thinking?

The current crisis in education is clearly an opportunity for future America. Our confusion in values and the breakdown of our educational system is a signal to change. If we change enough, it may be a breakthrough.

> On a farm or in a garden, breakdown is always the signal for breakthrough. After the harvest, during winter's parenthesis of life, the sere and decaying stalks of the previous year's vegetation collapse to provide the nutrients for the spring breakthrough of the reseeded earth.
>
> (Houston, 1982, p. 9)

Education is most certainly in what Naisbitt (1982) calls the "period of parenthesis," what Bridges (1980) calls "the neutral zone," and what Ferguson (1980) describes as that time when "the man on the flying trapeze is in between trapezes." It is time to let go of the old trapeze and grab onto a new one. We can change education to a new trapeze without forsaking our basic values or lowering our standards. We can change by broadening our concept of excellence, by providing everyone equal opportunity to strive toward their brand of excellence. We can change education by encouraging, promoting, even demanding a Creative And Responsible Excellence (CARE). EDUCARE. This new mission for education is not just another interesting acronym or another meaningless platitude. This new mission is profound and futuristic. It can be the future mission of counseling.

A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) is the most frequently quoted recent reform publication. However, the following is not often quoted.

> Excellence in education means several related things: at the level of the individual learner, it means performing on the boundary of individual ability in ways that test and push back personal limits, in school and in the workplace.

> Excellence characterizes a school or college that sets high standards and goals for all learners, then tries in every possible way to help students reach them.
>
> Excellence characterizes a society that has adopted these policies, for it will then be prepared through the education and skill of its people to respond to the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

What kind of excellence is creative and responsible excellence? What do we get when we honor many kinds of excellence? What should education of the future look like? If the future isn't what it used to be, why should we go back to basics? We need to stop going back. And stop going forth. We need what Marilyn Ferguson calls "a paradigm change rather than a pendulum change" (1980, p. 282).

LEARNING FROM THE FUTURE AND THE RAILROADS

In one way, today's crisis in public education is good news. It focuses attention on improving learning. We should keep the focus on improving learning, not on improving schools. Learning is the goal. Schools are but one method of achieving the goal.

An Industrial Society solution to today's education crisis would be to predict the future and to design schools to prepare students to fit into it, to teach students what future society will need. For example, California is reforming its schools by requiring more math, more science, and compulsory computer literacy.

Not only is the goal of such reform outdated, so are the methods. Traditional schooling (classroom instruction) is no longer the major factor in learning, even for youth. Much of what students learn is learned outside of school. Most of what adults learn is self-induced and self-managed. Predicting the future society and reflecting it in the educational system is one approach. Imagining a desirable future society and designing a learning system to create it is quite another. It is an approach using futures-oriented thinking; it is an Information Society solution.

To do this, "We must be able to learn from the future in precisely the ways we have learned from the past" (Naisbitt, 1982, p. 18). We need to look ahead to see the new kind of future we want to create, and we also need to look ahead to see new ways to create it.

Schooling and counseling can learn a lesson from the classical example of the railroad industry's failure to take a futures view. Railroads almost became obsolete, it is said, because they continued to insist they were in the railroad business instead of the transportation or communication business.

What business are schools in? What business are counselors in? Schooling and counseling are methods. Railroading is a method. Longer, harder and more schooling, counseling or railroading is not a solution for the future.

> A fanatic is someone who redoubles his efforts when he has forgotten his aim. (Santayana)

The solution to the crisis in education and business will come from a redefinition of our aim, not from a redoubling of our efforts. What business is education in? "When the business environment changes, a company or organization must reconceptualize its purpose in light of the changing world" (Naisbitt, 1982, p. 85). The business environment of education has changed. Have we changed its purpose?

Is purpose that important? Is it really necessary to define clearly what business education is in? Isn't what we do really more important than why we do it?

> Let us suppose that we were asked for one all purpose bit of advice for management, one truth that we were able to distill from the excellent companies research. We might be tempted to reply, 'Figure out your value system. Decide what your company stands for.'
>
> (Peters & Waterman, 1982, p. 279)

TAKING LEADERSHIP, NOT OWNERSHIP

What does counseling stand for? What will be the future of counseling if we broaden our concept of excellence and our concept of schooling? The future role will be one of leadership if we are also willing to expand our methods of counseling and teaching and our methods of thinking and learning. Broader concepts and expanded methods will put the counseling profession in the driver's seat on the road to excellent and equal educational reform.

Counseling has always been an educational process. Counseling is like teaching--clients learn from the counselor. Counselors facilitate the learning

process. People go to school and to counselors to learn. But those were the good old days--the information-poor Industrial Society, when the time orientation was the present, when the bottom-line was the here-and-now, when the future was predicted from the past. Today we are in an information-rich Information Society, when the time orientation is the future, when changes are occurring so rapidly in the present that the future cannot be predicted, only imagined. New information and new knowledge are being generated at such a pace that it is said for the child who is born today, 97% of what is known will be discovered in his/her lifetime (Wilson & Rotter, 1982, p. 354).

The conditions of the New Society, whether we call it the Information, Knowledge, or Learning Society, have changed the reasons why people should go to school or to counselors. Instead of going to learn, students and clients need to go to learn how to learn. Schooling and counseling should produce excellent learners. If new knowledge is developing at the rate suggested above, then learning what is already known will be insufficient preparation for the future. Consider these other trends:

- The amount of information that exists today is almost always greater than the processing capacity of an individual. Running out of it is not a problem, but drowning in it is. (Naisbitt)
- New technologies will not only revolutionize the workplace and the home but will also transform delivery methods of education and counseling. (Dede)
- The primary place of learning has shifted from school or college to such places as the home, the workplace, the military service base, the place of voluntary church or community service, the professional association's training sites, etc. (Niebuhr)
- A new way of thinking is now needed to deal with our present reality. No longer is the world seen in a blind play of separate parts, but sensitively with appreciation of the whole. (Salk)
- Within certain physical and biological constraints, it may be that the only limits on our abilities are our own beliefs and values. (Harman)
- Society has shifted from the myth of the melting pot to a celebration of cultural diversity. (Naisbitt)
- Power is changing hands, from dying hierarchies to living networks. Mutual help networks are becoming a powerful transformative force in America. It is in helping others than one is helped. (Ferguson)

o We are moving from specialist to generalist. The basic building block of society is shifting to the individual. (Naisbitt)

In a very real sense the future isn't what it used to be, and education shouldn't be what it used to be, and counseling shouldn't be what it used to be. Counseling should take the leadership role in creating the new kind of education, the new kind of learning, the new kind of society. But successful leadership will require giving away the authority, power, superiority, and ownership usually associated with leaders. Successful transformation will even require counselors to give away their counseling skills! The values, beliefs, and skills of the counseling profession have now become the key to achieving excellence, equality and educational revitalization for the kind of future we would all prefer.

Counseling principles have indeed become the force of the future. This force is seen in the future trends listed above, in the principles of Theory Z, in research into the attributes of successful companies, in many of the recommendations for educational reform, and in the paradigm shift, the turning point and the new wave. Counselors should use this force, but not own it.

Counseling principles and ideals are evident in the so-called paradigm shift taking place:

From	To
Interest in economic and natural growth	Interest in human growth and development
Concern for physical fixtures of geography and technology	Concern for inner frontiers of mind and spirit
People serving institutions	Institutions serving people, people helping people
Learning as an activity of limited duration in preparation for fitting into the future world.	Learning as prime concern of all phases of life to create the future world

Add to this the trust, subtlety, and intimacy of Theory Z, the ingredients of trust, respect and love found in In Search of Excellence (Peters & Waterman, 1982), and in the suggestion from the report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, A Nation at Risk (1983), that the value of learning is not contingent on any material public or private payoff, but that the activity itself, pursued not just in school but rather through a lifetime, is the payoff.

Now you get the picture of the kind of leadership role counselors and others must take. The paradigm shift will not happen by itself; the future we desire will not magically appear. Remember, there is no magic. There are two reasons why leadership is urgent for a new future.

1. Individuals are like light bulbs seeking a socket: We need the electric current of a doctrine to make our lives light up and glow. (Eric Hoffer)

2. For every progressive spirit there are 1,000 soldiers appointed to guard the past. (Anonymous)

In describing effective leadership to bring about change, Warren Bennis says that it is not so much the articulation of goals about what we should be doing that creates new practice, it's the imagery that creates the understanding, the compelling moral necessity that the new way is right (Peters & Waterman, 1982, p. 105).

SOFTCARE TO MATCH OUR HARDWARE

We need to promote an image that is compelling and that includes the concepts of excellence, equality, empathy and the other principles of the counseling profession, a democratic society, and the ingredients of modern successful business. Imagine a future world where the present technological and scientific developments continue and where human development begins to accelerate at a similar pace. In this world individuals not only have the knowledge that brought about these technological and scientific advances, but also possess knowledge about optimal personal and social growth and development. Individuals also have a confident, positive attitude toward living and learning; possess a belief and a commitment to the interrelatedness of people and things; are capable of compassionate caring and responsible relationships; and are competent in critical thinking, decision making and other self-management skills.

Speaking of a similar vision, Willis Harman said, "It is the imperative task of our generation to envision such a world, and to begin to create it" (1982, p. 1). If we do not, we are an endangered species, in danger of becoming "technopeasants," people whose lives depend on technology and who have become serfs of modern machines. We would become, as Henry Thoreau once said, "tools of our tools."

The remedy lies in attitude. The technological generation must be able to adapt to constant change. People must possess the disposition for lifelong learning. They must possess the 4-C skills of the future:

> Confidence--high self-confidence and positive attitudes toward living and learning.
>
> Connectedness--values and behavior based on the interrelatedness of things and people.
>
> Compassion--an ability to establish and maintain caring and responsible relationships with others.
>
> Choosing--competence in decision making and other self-management skills.

Counselors, of course, are in an excellent position to assist adults in acquiring these 4-C future skills. However, what may be more important is that counselors take leadership in helping others see the vision, the image, the need for these skills and the compelling necessity to acquire them. Remember, what is honored will be cultivated.

How important is this leadership of mission?

> Among its many challenges it is evident that American Society has no more pressing task than to strengthen the human learning system. It is as essential a task as lowering interest rates, bringing inflation under control, and aggregating the necessary venture capital to move us into a high technology economy.
>
> (Niebuhr, 1982, p. 20)

If it sounds like this is an unreasonable task to ask of the counseling profession, remember that we are not alone--we are riding a wave of a paradigm shift and we are part of a growing "Aquarian Conspiracy." And remember, the future depends on it.

The reasonable man adapts himself to the world, the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man.

(George Bernard Shaw)

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CAUGHT IN A DILEMMA: ADULTS AS LEARNERS

Nancy K. Schlossberg

Adults learn everywhere--at supermarkets, in front of TV, at church, work, home and school. Most recently, Aslanian and Brickell (1980) have pointed to the increasing number of adults whose engagement in new learnings is triggered by transitions; Cross (1981) has outlined the many settings in which adults learn, with details about the motivators and barriers to such learnings; Barton (1982) has described the problems and possibilities of connecting adult learners with learning opportunities; and Hodgkinson (1983) points out that we have built a

> second system of post-secondary education... where seventy-five percent of adults involved in formal education are doing so outside of colleges and universities... in industry, the military, government, voluntary agencies. (pp. 11, 14)

It is indeed challenging to brainstorm ways that counselors can work with the ever-increasing corps of adult learners. I have, for two main reasons, decided to focus on adults who are learners in institutions of higher education. First, we already have well-conceptualized models of community-based advocacy, networking, and linking systems. What they need is funding. Second, institutions of higher education should be the ideal setting for learning--by adults as well as by the young; and, if those institutions do not adjust to the needs of adult learners, inevitably, the trend toward education outside the university will continue.

I believe that the character of adulthood and the character of the educational institutions are out of synchrony. We need to take a hard-nosed look at the structure of institutions so that we are not misled into thinking that creative pedagogical approaches, technological innovations, or new delivery systems can, in and of themselves, resolve the adjustment and other problems of adults in higher education. Furthermore, we must resist the temptation to grab on to simple definitions of adulthood in the context of the adult learner or adult student.

Psychologists, counselors, and guidance personnel are uniquely qualified to examine the educational bureaucracy and work collaboratively to redesign it so it

can better serve the increasing number of adult learners. To do that, counselors need to understand the underlying dilemma: the heterogeneity of adults, the actual and potential rigidities in bureaucratic systems, and their own power to change the system.

THE DILEMMA

This dilemma has two parts: (1) that adults are heterogeneous, their life patterns divergent--more so as they age--while bureaucracies tend to be rigid, conservative, and hierarchical and, in many cases, encourage dependency rather than autonomy in adults; and (2) that adults simultaneously need individualized opportunities and community engagement.

Fluid Life Span and Rigid Educational Settings

Who is the adult student? Is the adult student the individual who has been out of school for several years and has decided to return in his or her early 30s? Certainly there are such people, but there are others, too. Is the adult student a person who has gone about as far as he or she can go and decides to change gears and change direction--back to law school, for example? Is the adult a 50-year-old or a 30-year-old? Is the adult experienced or inexperienced? In other words, is there a definable entity known as the adult learner? Is there a distinct way in which adults learn? Unquestionably, there is such a person as an adult learner, as evidenced by the growing number of books and articles on the subject. But there is no single entity such as the adult learner. Adult learners constitute a heterogeneous group much like younger learners. Some are bright, others are dull; some are knowledgeable, others ignorant; some are energetic, others apathetic; some are anxious, others confident; some process information in a rigid manner, others are able to handle and digest complex, ambiguous material. They are of varying ages and places in the life span and from different social classes. In other words, there is great variability.

Underlying this discussion is the degree to which we differentiate people by age. On the one hand are those who see chronological age itself as the defining variable. For example, according to Daniel Levinson (1978), the issues of the 20-

year-old are quite distinct from those of say the 40-year-old. Levinson links adult behavior to age and describes six distinct periods emphasizing sequentiality and similarity in the adult experience. This view has been widely noted in both the popular and scholarly press. Opposing these stage theorists are those scholars like Bernice Neugarten (1982) who analyze the complexities, varieties, and heterogeneities of adulthood, who look at continuity and change across the course of life, but who are more concerned with the lack of predictability, with the surprises, with the unexpected things that can happen at any age to anyone. Neugarten concludes that people grow old differently. In fact, the scope of these differences becomes greater, not narrower. Hagestad (in press) demonstrates the impossibility of assuming that adult lives follow an orderly, linear process. Actually, the process is circular. Careers are interrupted and started and individuals make loops in the age system. Examples of such loops would be a woman who becomes a college freshman at the age of 45 or a man who starts a new family at the age of 50. People engage in renewal activities all through adulthood; for example, in a given class one might find three grandmothers ranging in age from 50 to 80. Being a grandmother today is not what it was in the past. Some are young and some are old; some are tired and some are fresh. What we are seeing is a demographic change where four- and five-generation families may be the norm; where one can be both a grandmother and a granddaughter simultaneously; where the fact that one is a grandmother, mother, or wife should not be the end of inquiry--it does not say anything about whether a person is ending or beginning a career. Furthermore, one cannot always tell the difference between people who are 30 or 50--the dress is not that different; the hairstyle is not that different. Fifty- and sixty-year-olds now wear jeans to class.

Many educators talk and think about the adult learner and the adult student as if there were such a recognizable entity for whom there is a set way of teaching, a set way of learning. It is tempting but wrong to assume that appearances and age can provide an understanding of what people think or feel, or how they behave. There is, I submit, a fluid life course. We are experiencing what Patricia Cross (1981) calls the "blended life pattern" in which a person does not necessarily follow a prescribed life course--meaning one no longer goes to school, works, marries, and has children in that order. Some people are marrying for the first time at 60; others are becoming grandparents at 40 or 80 for the first time. The facts about adult students

that count are really quite different from many current widely-held assumptions. In fact, adults are a most diverse group. Of course people of all ages are heterogeneous and diverse; but as people age, their idiosyncratic experiences and different commitments produce much more variability, not less.

The second part of this analysis rests on my assumption about educational institutions. This can be best illustrated by a recent encounter I had with a mature student. While having lunch, I asked her, "What does it feel like to be an adult student?" After a moment's hesitation, she answered, "I'm a bag lady. I shuffle around the school in winter with two bags--one for books and one for boots. I have no place to go to sit, receive messages, make phone calls. I am dependent upon professors letting me come into their offices. I have no way to hear if my child is ill. I have no dignity."

Three major issues in the current educational setting emerge from her story--the dependent status of adult learners in higher education, the marginality of such learners, and the bureaucratic structure of higher education. Students, traditionally thought of as children and young adults, are seen as dependent on authorities and needing the expert guidance of scholars and bureaucrats. Adults are traditionally thought of as in charge of their own and others' lives. Thus we have the essential paradox. It stems from our perception of the words "adult" and "student." Adults are usually trying to maintain continued control over their lives and to preserve independence, while many people place students in a dependent, marginal position. When the two terms--"adult" and "student"--are put together, the academy tends to neglect the adult and concentrate on the student.

A study of male professionals in work organizations is relevant (Dalton, Thompson & Price, 1977). The researchers identified the potential career progression for these men. At the start of their careers they served in apprentice-like roles which were psychologically dependent. As they moved up the ladder they became colleagues, psychologically independent. Then they were seen as mentors, feeding the psychological dependency of others. The final possible career progression was to that of sponsor, psychologically involved with issues of power. The educational bureaucracy originally served young adults in apprentice-like roles dealing with dependency issues. Adults who begin school or return to school have probably served as colleagues, mentors, or sponsors in either their families, jobs, or communities.

Thus, it is probable that many adults will find it difficult to regress from colleague, mentor, or sponsor status in "real" life to being an apprentice, dependent on faculty and administrators. Suddenly they are Bill, Joe, and Anna, while those in charge are Doctor, Mr., and Mrs.--and sometimes younger and less experienced.

In addition, learners at educational institutions are too often subjected to an authoritarian, hierarchical style of operation by faculty and administrators. For example, curriculum content, course schedules and structures, grading, and policies respecting attendance, discipline, and even financial aid are generally set in the institution with little or no participation by students--old or young. Merton, in his chapter entitled "Bureaucratic Structure and Personality" (1957), discusses the hierarchical nature of bureaucracy. What makes bureaucracy work--its pecking order with specified obligations and privileges which are defined in very specific ways--also contains its "dysfunctions," the main one being the inflexibility of the bureaucracy to adapt to new conditions.

My conclusion, stated earlier, is that the character of adulthood and the character of social institutions, in this case education, are out of synchrony. The clash occurs as institutions rely on rigid rules, regulations, and policies. Adults, who come in all sizes and shapes, cannot flourish as they conform to a dependent status. To flourish, adult learners need to feel central not marginal, competent not childish, independent not dependent.

Individuals and Communities

In addition to the lack of synchrony between fluid life span and educational bureaucracy is another dilemma of significance. At the same time that adults have the need for an individualized program of instruction, they also have a need to be connected to the community--to matter. Meyerhoff (1978), the anthropologist, underscores the essential paradox of the human condition--that people simultaneously need both separateness and community connectedness. There have been many experiments dealing with both needs. The experiments of the 1960s and 70s addressed the individual's need to be connected to the community by establishing small colleges within larger universities, or weekend colleges especially for blue-collar workers. The failure of the 60s experiments is attributable partly to the problems encountered by faculty who, as they participated in these new experimental

college communities, lost ground in their own subject matter departments. This, of course, led to problems in promotion and tenure, and perhaps to insecurity--an unfortunate consequence.

The current experiments in higher education deal with the limitless possibilities of new technology. Computers and other technological wonders such as electronic mail and teleconferencing, videotaping, television-assisted courses, all enable individuals to learn when and where they want. For example, the International Consortium for Telecommunications in Learning is developing high quality humanities and behavioral science courses which adults can take when they have the time or inclination to do so. Many of the newer computer-based guidance programs are also available to individual adults at their own initiation. Many of the external degree programs enable individuals to study alone and at self-selected times. We must be wary, however, that these new technological innovations, which are geared for the individual learner, might in fact have the unintended consequence of isolating the individual in ways that could be unfortunate.

These innovations which we see in higher education, based either on developing communities within communities or on new technology, seem to address only one side of the paradox--the need for community versus the need for individuality in learning. Meyerhoff reminds us that paradoxes contain contradictory truths. Therefore, solutions must address both.

SOLUTIONS: FROM BUREAUCRACY TO COMMUNITY

The counselor has a unique opportunity to resolve the paradox by creating and developing a community which is a place to belong to and to matter, at the same time being cognizant and sensitive to the individuality of each person, to the changing needs over the course of a life, to the heterogeneity of adults. Thus, the counselor of the future has the challenge to deal simultaneously with individual learning and pacing and with a sense of community and belonging. To do this, the counselor of tomorrow will want to resolve the problem presented by the fact that the adult and the institution seem to be out of synchrony. Traditionally, counselors and psychologists have been seen as purveyors of "the secular religion," practicing

psychotherapy, "a new priestly rite" (Kegan, 1982, p. 256). Kegan suggests that rather than continuing this trend of focusing on individual adjustment, it would be more productive to reconstruct communities as environments which are supportive and challenging. His challenge is superb; meeting the challenge is more difficult.

A word first about some aspects of community. It occurs to me that working class people have bars and restaurants; upper classes have country clubs. Both are places where people can drop in and spend as much or as little time as they want and be as involved or as uninvolved as they choose. Thus bars and country clubs allow for the paradoxical need for separateness and community. Is it not possible that educational institutions could be such communities--places to go, to drop in periodically and differently as one's needs change? Sometimes in one's life, one could drop in as a dilettante; at other times the institution could be a place to become more involved in serious scholarship, a place for intellectual stimulation, a place to rethink a change in direction, a place to go for renewal, a place to go for comfort, a place to go to meet other people in the same boat. Is that impossible? Is that a wild daydream? There is no easy answer to the task before us--creating an environment that simultaneously makes people feel they matter while providing for their unique situations, learning styles, time constraints.

In order to work toward this ideal kind of community, counselors need a new perspective and some refocusing of old tools. Donald Michael (1983) provides a fresh vision when he suggests the possibility of "heterarchical" rather than hierarchical systems. The opposite of top-down management, this approach suggests matrix management where leaders are changing depending on the task to be solved. This promotes flexibility of roles and functions. Michael writes,

> I am fully aware that... what I call the new competence challenges standard administrative ways of operating. It requires new criteria, accountability, status, turf, entitlement, decision areas. All of these, after all, are based on a mythology that expects a competent person to exercise control and produce outcomes. Instead, however, accountability might well be based more on the process, on the quality of decision making rather than as it so often is now, on short-range outcomes which frequently conceal adverse systematic or long-range outcomes. (p. 262)

Moving from hierarchy to heterarchy requires that counselors move from individual assessment and therapy to environmental assessment and restructuring.

Two useful tools can help counselors move in this direction: (1) the device of quality circles, and (2) environmental assessment.

Ralph Barra (1983) of Westinghouse promotes the use of quality circles when he writes:

> Most of us have problems. Sometimes the solutions lie within ourselves, our families, our working groups, our communities. Sometimes, however, these solutions seem to be beyond what we can handle as individuals. In those situations we often look for someone to represent us in the larger problem-solving process.

We elect an official; we have a boss, a manager.

> Quality circles present a different approach to problem solving which brings together the employees and manager. Quality circles are based on a set of techniques that involve individuals who work together in the problem solving process....Identifying the problem isn't the end of the quality circles job. The quality circle goes on to investigate exactly what caused the problem, to determine the best way to solve the problem, to recommend the solution...and to put that solution into practice if it is approved. (pp. 79-80)

In fact, it is the interaction of the group and the building of feelings of competence that are as important as the substantive results.

Although we have heard of quality circles and known of their increasing utilization in business and industry, they are only now being adapted to education. Counselors seem the ideal group to take the lead in adopting and adapting them in educational institutions. I was reminded that this adaptation is very possible when a student in my class instituted a quality circle in his educational institution. His problem was one that is common to all of us: The teachers, the psychologists, and the administrators were unable to work together creatively to help individual students in trouble. Everyone knew of the problem but somehow they could not get over the turf barriers that existed. The student became trained as a quality circle leader. He followed the steps very specifically--identification of the problem, brainstorming alternative solutions, collecting data and presenting it convincingly, using force field analysis to implement the solution. What happened was extraordinary. What had started out as an academic task resulted in changing his community.

How can this apply to the problem of adults? It seems to me that adult students, faculty, and administrators could collaboratively deal with the dilemmas presented in this paper plus other issues they identify that might be even more relevant. The goal would be to come up with ways to create the kind of community that would be beneficial not only for the adult learners but for everyone in the community. Quality circles are merely a process to create a supportive climate in which the dignity and ingrained individuality of each participant is nurtured and encouraged. That builds community.

In addition to learning the techniques, tools, and ways to become trained in such processes as qua ity circles, counselors also could take the lead in assessing the environment and its impact on adults. Rudolph Moos (1979) and his colleagues at the Stanford Social Ecology Laboratory have developed ways of assessing any environment, be it a school, a nursing home, a prison, a residence hall. Their assessment focuses on three major dimensions of any environment: the relationship dimension, the personal growth dimension, and the clarity of expectations. The relationship dimension is concerned with the extent to which people are involved in the setting and the extent to which they support and help one another. The personal growth orientation deals with the degree to which the environment encourages personal development and self-enhancement. The final dimension refers to the degree to which the environment is clear in its expectations. Using scales developed to assess these three dimensions, counselors can measure the degree to which any environment encourages becoming involved in the setting, attending to oneself, and being clear about others' expectations.

The shift in perspective that I am suggesting is one that has been seeping into the literature more and more: that the counselor be an environmentalist as opposed to an individual therapist, that the counselor be involved in prevention rather than remediation, and that the counselor be proactive rather than merely responsive. I think counselors are in a very fortunate position to have at their disposal tools to assess environments and processes that have been tested and tried as vehicles for collaborative problem solving.

Kegan (1982) criticizes therapists for their authoritarian stance and points out that therapists and patients are in a similar lifelong quest for making meaning out of life. He writes: "In the end, I believe we are bound by a single fate and do not share

it so much as it shares us" (p. 265). Translating this to administrators, faculty, and adult learners, all three groups are in the same boat. They are all at times mentors, sometimes mentees; sometimes they are excited and turned on, other times burned out and stagnated. They are at times experts, at other times novices. They are simultaneously competent, incompetent; dependent, independent; marginal, central. Through the use of such tools as quality circles and environmental assessment these groups are in a position to share their fate and change it collaboratively. Collaboration is, of course, the key.

The unique challenge for counselors is to create a supportive environment which celebrates the paradox of adult learners--simultaneously needing individuality and connection to build a supportive climate and a collaborative community. To do this, the counselor of tomorrow should, as the anthropologist does, understand inherent contradictions, mysteries, and ambiguities in the human condition; should, as the sociologist, understand the interconnectedness of the bureaucratic system; should, as the community psychologist, understand how to change the system; and finally, must, as the humanist, care about people and make them feel that they matter. They really do, and we in the helping professions need to demonstrate our conviction that they do. Over and over.

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WHAT AN IDEAL COUNSELING/SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR THE ADULT LEARNER SHOULD LOOK LIKE

Edwin L. Herr

Counseling for adult learners is a relatively new phenomenon in the United States. Its importance has risen as social and occupational presses for lifelong learning have escalated and as increased discretionary time and longer life spans have broadened the constituencies for whom adult learning is relevant.

Given the wide latitude by which adult learners may be defined, an ideal counseling/support program must be definitive about which group(s) of adults it plans to serve. Differences in learning styles, basic learning skills previously acquired, and motivations for learning among different groups of potential or actual adult learners are only some of the characteristics of the adults to which counseling and support programs need to attend.

In conceptualizing an ideal counseling/support program for the adult learner, this paper will contend that several major questions need to be addressed:

1. Which adult learner(s) are we concerned about?
2. How do adult learners differ in their characteristics from adolescent learners?
3. What are the content and process emphases which need to be considered in the provision of counseling/support programs for the adult learner?
4. How can technology be embedded in a counseling/support program for adult learners?

While neither these questions nor the answers which ensue are exhaustive of those which need to be addressed and analyzed in formulating what an ideal counseling/support program for the adult learner would look like, they constitute elements vital to the process of such formulation. In this brief concept paper, each of these questions will be considered in turn.

WHICH ADULT LEARNERS ARE WE CONCERNED ABOUT?

In an emerging or transforming society in which information, theory, or knowledge is the fuel for personal action in the workplace or in personal development, all adults are potential learners. Aslanian and Brickell (1980) set the number of adults over 25 years of age at 126 million. Obviously not all of these adults are simultaneously in formal programs of learning within traditional educational institutions. However, if one adopts a broad definition of the human learning system (Niebuhr, 1982) as encompassing sources of learning in the family, church, community, media, cultural and recreational agencies, the peer group, and the workplace as well as that which is self-induced, traditional educational institutions would be a small part of the total human learning system; as a result relatively few adults would be excluded as learners.

Defining the target group of adult learners as all of those over age 25 does little except suggest the enormity of the problem of providing counseling or support programs to such a constituency. More important, such a statistic by itself obscures the heterogeneity of learning motivations, skills, or other characteristics of those to be served by counseling and support systems.

Learning Motivations

Aslanian and Brickell (1980) conducted a national study in which they found that most adult learners did not learn randomly but rather as a function of life transitions and triggering events. In sum:

> Most adults learn in order to move out of some status they must or wish to leave and into some new status they must or wish to enter. That is, their reason for learning was to perform well in the new status. (p. 52)

Several major transitions were defined as requiring learning: careers, family, leisure, art, health, religion, and citizenship. By far, however, the major "triggers" for learning are career-related events (e.g., promotions, the arrival of new equipment, the need for an occupational license), followed by family-related events (e.g., divorce, widowhood, "empty nest"), and in a distant third place, health changes (e.g., heart attack, broken leg) requiring new learning to deal successfully with other life

areas such as career or family. Each of these major categories represents a way to conceptualize the types of emphases and content which counseling and support programs for adults need to include.

As might be expected, Aslanian and Brickell's study showed that there are differences in the personal characteristics of those who learn because of one kind of transition rather than another. For example, men learn more often than women because of career changes, while women learn more often than men because of family, leisure or health transitions. Adults under age 65 learn chiefly because of career transitions, while adults over 65 learn chiefly because of leisure and family transitions. Workers and students learn primarily to make career transitions, while homemakers and retired persons learn primarily to make leisure and family transitions. Adults who are single, married, or divorced learn mainly because of their leisure and family activities (p. 97). Learning by professionals and managers is triggered by career events in their lives more often than for other workers. The same is true for craftspersons, due perhaps to the obsolescence or modification of their jobs because of rapidly changing technology. On the other hand, learning triggered by family events is more common among sales/clerical workers, operators, and service workers. This is traceable partly to the fact that those occupations are filled disproportionately by women, for whom family triggers are usually more numerous than for men (p. 96).

Learning Skills

While learning motivations are obviously important matters to be considered in designing counseling and support programs for adult learners, so are learning skills. It is reasonable to assume that many adult learners are able to learn what they need to learn because they are educationally advantaged: They have achieved a college or graduate degree, have finished high school or have demonstrated their learning competence by the previous acquisition of fairly sophisticated skills, career or otherwise, and now need to be retrained and are capable of doing so. This group of persons may differ in their preferred learning style--oral, printed word, visual--but they have the basic skills by which to engage in learning.

However, if the adult learners about whom counselors are to be concerned encompass the whole range of adults who need to engage in various types of learning,

there are serious skill problems in some subsets of the adult population. For example, Choate (1982) reported studies showing that 20 to 30 percent of the adult population is functionally illiterate. Northcutt's studies (Knowles, 1977) suggest that only 40 percent of the American adult population is coping adequately with typical life problems (e.g., getting work and holding a job, buying things, parenting, managing their economic lives). The National Assessment of Educational Progress reported similar findings about the skill deficits of adults and the needs that exist in terms of learning (Westbrook, 1977). Obviously adult learning for these groups is more problematic and requires major attention to basic academic skills and the emotionality which relates to such circumstances. The counseling and support programs for such educationally disadvantaged groups is likely to differ in its content, intensity, and multidimensionality from that for many other groups of adult learners.

Cross (1978), in differentiating among major categories of adult learners, suggests that "those with motivation, past success, good information networks, and adequate funds" continue to learn (p. 12) while those who have not had early success in school tend to lag farther behind and lack interest or the skills to return to school. In the latter group she suggested that there were three categories of barriers, either real or used as rationalizations, to engaging in learning: (1) situational barriers, (2) dispositional barriers, and (3) institutional barriers. Some of the specifics of each will be discussed later.

In the final analysis--whether one is considering advantaged adults who have the motivation, purpose, and resources to engage in adult learning, or less advantaged adults who are desperate or forced to engage in learning to remain employed, gain employment or qualify for various government schemes--it is likely that these are people who have multiple problems to deal with. These latter problems are frequently the content not only of counseling but of support groups as they attempt to deal with such matters as transportation to work or education; racial, ethnic or gender discrimination; poor industrial discipline; family discord; chemical dependency; inability to manage resources; or child care problems.

HOW DO ADULT LEARNERS DIFFER IN THEIR CHARACTERISTICS FROM ADOLESCENT LEARNERS?

Historically, counselors have known more about adolescent learners than about adult learners. While the needs of these two groups are not mutually exclusive, some concerns are rather uniquely those of adult learners. For example, with regard to the decision to return to school, Seltz and Collier (1977) have suggested that adults make such decisions in a context of multiple personal responsibilities and emotional demands on their time and energy. Because an adult's self-concept is based on a longer history of life experience than that of an adolescent, the adult is inclined to be more pragmatic in educational and career choice decisions. In addition, adults contemplating career changes experience a different set of motivations from those prompting initial explorations of the labor market by adolescents.

Porter (1970) suggested that the counseling problems of adult learners include such areas as the following: lack of self-confidence in their ability to learn, unrealistic expectations of progress, conflicting values and attitudes, theoretical or irrelevant learning tasks, seeking help too late or from the wrong sources, lack of efficient reading and study habits, press of time, significance of long-range goals, implications of family life, greater life experiences, employment and job circumstances, mechanics of attending class, memories as obstacles, voluntary basis of continuing education, and lack of continuity with faculty and counselors.

Aslanian and Brickell (1980) have summarized many of their findings about adult learner needs for counseling and information by citing the following implications:

- Many adults in transition do not know that learning can help them succeed.
- Many adults do not know their own potential.
- Many adults do not know what they have to learn in order to succeed, and in order to become what they can.
- Many adults do not know where they can learn.
- Many adults do not see benefits for themselves in formal educational institutions.
- Many adults do not choose providers on the basis of academic reputation but rather on how useful their learning would be.

- Many adults cannot find providers who offer suitable learning; other adults prefer to learn on their own, even if suitable providers are available.
- Many adults cannot predict when and for what purposes they will need to learn.
- Many adults cannot make career transitions successfully through learning unless they have good information and effective counseling.
- Many adults will not learn in life areas in which they spend little time and experience few transitions.
- Many adults are deterred from learning because of their personal characteristics.
- Many adults do not know that they might not even have to study--that they can earn high school diplomas or college credit simply by taking examinations to demonstrate what they have learned through experience.
- Many adults who are most in need of learning--the disadvantaged and the minorities--are least engaged in it (p. 125-126).

Collectively, the problems and needs of adult learners cited in items 1 and 2 represent the rationale for counseling and support programs for such learners. In that sense they can be seen as a matrix of needs which define the potential content of counseling and support systems for adult learners.

The rough outline of the emphases of such a matrix designed to identify the concerns of different groups of adult learners can be conceived as follows:

Career Transitions

Who
Under 65
Professionals, managers, craftspersons
More men than women
Single, married, or divorced adults

What
Decision-making
Implementing plans
Achieving organizational/institutional performance at an acceptable level
Accomplishing organizational/institutional adaptation
Understanding the value and application of previously learned skills
Acquiring job search skills
Coping with unemployment

Family Transitions

Who
More men than women
Sales/clerical workers, operators and service workers
Homemakers and retired persons

What
Coping with grief and bereavement
Parenting
Marital communications
Prenatal care
Child development
Budgeting and resource management

Health Transitions

Who
Over 65
Anyone experiencing traumatic health-related events

What
Adjusting role definition
Learning about functional limitations in work from physical problems
Medical management
Methods of relaxation, pain management, biofeedback

Leisure Transitions

Who
Homemakers and retired persons

What
Preretirement strategies
Adjusting self-image
Leisure opportunities available
Relating leisure to personal needs

Educational Disadvantagement

Who
Any adult with poor academic skills or functional illiteracy

What
Managing one's resources
Consumer economics
Job search and access skills
Self-image

Basic education skills
Reading
Writing
Computation
Study habits

New Adult Learners

Who
Any adult considering entry or just entering formal adult learning

What
Lack of self-confidence in ability to learn
Unrealistic expectations of progress
Conflicting values and attitudes
Theoretical or irrelevant learning tasks
Seeking help too late or from the wrong sources
Lack of efficient reading and study habits
Press of time
Significance of long-range goals
Implications of family life
Identifying functional impact of life experiences
Employment and job circumstances
Mechanics of attending class
Lack of continuity with faculty and other students
Child care
Transportation
Identifying and managing financial resources

New Workers

Who
Any adult contemplating or pursuing work entry or change

What
Job performance
Responsibility
Maturity
Attitudes and values
Work habits
Adjustment to peers and supervisors
Communication at work
Role-taking
Self-image
Coping with automation and new technology
Job entry, career planning, and management
Job-seeking
Interview and test taking
Geographic mobility

Family and personal situational adjustment
Job layoffs and rejections
Prejudice and discrimination
Occupational aspirations and job expectations
Career planning and management

The problems or learning needs cited here are not mutually exclusive from one group to another. But they do signal the need for counselors to be sensitive in their assessment and intake roles to themes which may be of particular importance to selected individuals in groups which are more or less vulnerable to particular concerns, barriers, or dilemmas.

Obviously, such perspectives are only the crudest of indicators of what adult learners need in order either to learn about the contextual situations in which they are living or are moving toward, or to develop the skills or coping behaviors necessary to master the new status to which they aspire or which is emerging as a function of some set of life transitions. In broad brush, these types of indicators provide constructs which guide the assessment by counselors or others of the type of learning in which particular adults need to engage. As such, they provide insight for the learner and the counselor about the particular interaction of situational, dispositional, and institutional factors which need to be addressed in a learning plan.

WHAT ARE CONTENT AND PROCESS ISSUES IN COUNSELING/SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR THE ADULT LEARNER?

As the previous sections have suggested, adult learners vary in the motivations and skills they bring to learning. Many of the behaviors they need to acquire deal directly with technical or intellectual content of some type (e.g., learning about new equipment or concepts or upgrading academic skills). Rarely will counselors or support programs be directly involved with this type of learning per se. However, such technical learning does not occur in a vacuum nor is it likely to be entered into impulsively.

In the first instance, technical or intellectual learning occurs within an emotional context which may have to do with one's confidence about his or her ability to learn, or one's certainty about whether or not it is appropriate to pursue the family and financial sacrifices likely to be engendered by the requirements of learning. For

example, can one really manage one's time, energy, money, child care, family responsibilities sufficiently well that one will be free to deal with the intellectual tasks required? Obviously, such questions are counseling questions which might be dealt with in any one of a number of ways. Frequently, they are questions of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) or questions of cognitive restructuring (Meichenbaum & Turk, 1976), but they also may include behavioral rehearsal, role-playing, improving study skills or other such approaches.

In the second instance, decisions about adult learning represent another major counselor/support program emphasis. Many persons are completely ignorant of what opportunities for adult learning are available, how to match personal characteristics and experiences with adult learning possibilities, how to access such opportunities, and how to predict the odds of success or other advantages from engaging in different forms of adult learning. At the least, counselors dealing with such issues will need to engage in the brokering of different adult learning opportunities, assessment of individual characteristics, provision of information, decision-making skill training, and the facilitation of support. In the latter instance, counselors may lead or otherwise insure the availability of support groups for adults considering a return to learning or some alternative responses to transition with which these adults are currently engaged.

While such process roles as counselor, broker, or enabler of adult learners are each viable in terms of the two instances cited above, there is a third instance in which the counselor becomes teacher and model. As suggested in the many types of adult learning described above, much needed adult learning is attitudinal, dispositional, or behavioral as opposed to intellectual or technical as previously defined. These are fuzzy distinctions but useful in general terms.

What is suggested here is that most of the transitions with which adult learners are trying to cope require skills which counselors can help them to learn. Such a view is consistent with major thrusts in mental health theory which are moving away from reliance on "disease entities" as an explanation of behavioral problems and toward greater attention to the behavioral or skill components of what many observers describe as problems in living. The substance of such approaches has been skill training as a major intervention modality for primary prevention and for treatment. The assumption that skills can be taught as a means of eliminating inter-

personal deficits or teaching new behaviors is consistent with a behavioral rather than a disease orientation toward counseling and mental health services delivery. From a behavioral orientation, personal competence is seen as a series of skills which an individual either possesses or can learn through training (Danish et al., in press). Termed by some observers as "life development skills," these objects of intervention include cognitive and physical skills; interpersonal skills such as initiating, developing and maintaining relationships (e.g., self-disclosing, communicating feelings accurately and unambiguously, being supportive, and being able to resolve conflicts and relationship problems constructively) (Johnson, 1981); and intrapersonal skills such as developing self-control, tension management and relaxation, setting goals, taking risks (Danish, Galambos, & Laquatra, in press).

Undoubtedly, these conceptions of life coping skills are gaining in credibility as research is unfolding about the importance of specific types of skills or the barriers to access to particular kinds of environments which can be overcome by the possession of particular skills, many of which are important to either the content or the process of adult learning. For example, with respect to career-related problems, several recent research studies offer content for adult learning. One of these has to do with job search assistance. After extensive research on the matter, Wegmann (1979) concluded that:

> Job finding is a learnable skill. To be more precise, the ability to find a suitable job in a reasonable period of time demands a series of learnable skills. Because some jobs come easily, and because situations demanding that a person find a new job come only irregularly (and sometimes at long intervals), many people who undertake a job search lack critical information and essential communication and interviewing techniques. (p. 197)

Somewhat similarly, Haccoun and Campbell (1972) identified the work entry problems of new workers in two classes: (1) those dealing with job performance (e.g., responsibility, maturity, attitudes and values, work habits, adjustment to peers and supervisors, communication, taking on new roles, self-image, coping with automation and new technology); and (2) those dealing with job entry, career planning and management problems (e.g., job-seeking, interview and test-taking, geographic mobility, family and personal situational adjustment, job layoffs and rejection, prejudice and discrimination, occupational aspirations and job expectations, career

planning and management). A final example is the research of Campbell and Cellini (1981) on adult employability. These authors contend that across the stages of adult career behavior, four common tasks tend to recur: (1) decision-making, (2) implementing plans, (3) achieving organizational/institutional performance at an acceptable level, and (4) accomplishing organizational/institutional adaptation so that the individual can effectively take part in the work environment. Each of these emphases represents potential skill deficits which some individual adults need to deal with through learning. They also represent themes around which counseling and support programs focused on the career concerns of adults may be organized. Other research studies can be identified which describe themes around which other programs can be developed (e.g., family or health skills).

There are currently projects in several nations dealing with the facilitation of life coping skills, whether these are specifically defined in terms of assertiveness training, decision-making, psychosocial development, test-taking, performance anxiety, obesity or smoking control, anger management, stress inoculation or similar emphases. The content of these projects is finding its way into counseling programs under a variety of titles (e.g., microtraining, deliberate psychological education). The important point, however, is that such perspectives give increasing credibility to the notion that counseling is not only a matter of process but also one of content.

Such approaches tend to affirm that much of counseling is an educative and skill-building process. Indeed, one could contend that the directed learning--workshops, skill-training--that now takes place in many counseling programs constitutes a "behavioral curriculum" which has its own integrity as it interacts with or supports other types of learning. Undoubtedly such content has much to offer adult learners in the future.

To return to counseling process issues briefly, it is useful to consider the counselor's role in dealing with the type of behavioral content just described. For whatever purposes skill training programs are used, they tend to share several components of active counselor-client (learner) participation, homework and rehearsal. In most instances, the counselor explains the behavior to be targeted, e.g., occupational stress, irrational beliefs, communication skills; the counselor then models the skills to be learned; clients or students are frequently given homework to read or to do, e.g., keep a behavioral log; trainees rehearse targeted skills in simulated

exercises with counselor feedback, reinforcement, and suggestions; finally, clients or students apply the skills learned to real life situations and monitor their own behavior (Herr, 1983).

In the future, it appears likely that the counselor playing such roles will use skill training as only one of the repertoire of scientifically validated processes useful in resolving particular types of problems. Thus, the counselor of the future who works with adult learners or, indeed, other adult populations will likely become more systematically eclectic, able to apply differential treatments, or use multimodal approaches which acknowledge the multidimensionality of most problems which adults experience.

Whether serving as a broker, information provider, encourager, empathic listener, assessment specialist, or trainer, the counselor of the future is likely to be more active and proactive in the services provided to adult learners. Adult learners operate within a time press and set of multiple responsibilities which do not allow the luxury of prolonged and abstract conversation. Rather, goal-setting and active participation by counselor and learner in skill development and in attempts to resolve multiple dimensional issues are likely to describe counselor roles with adult learners in the future.

HOW CAN TECHNOLOGY BE EMBEDDED IN COUNSELING/SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR ADULT LEARNERS?

The counselor working with programs for adult learners is likely to become a technologist in order to support the other roles he or she will need to play. Gaming, work sampling, assessment centers, films, problem solving kits, self-directed assessments are forms of technology which will be used to extend the counselor's role in adult learning.

Undoubtedly, the premier technology incorporated in counseling programs of the future will be computer-mediated technology used in combination with such items as videocassettes and videodiscs. Whether mainframe or micro, computers will provide adult learners opportunities to engage in assessment, exploration, behavioral rehearsal, planning and the simulation of likely outcomes of action alternatives. Counselor brokering of adult learning opportunities matched to learner needs will be

facilitated by the information retrieval and matching capability of the computer. As such functions are carried on by the computer, the counselor will be able to devote primary time to personalizing with the adult learners the various opportunities open to them and help them construct action plans which reinforce individual responsibility and competence.

Several computer-assisted guidance systems--e.g., DISCOVER II, SIGI, Choices--have been adapted for use by adult populations in assessing interests, examining values, identifying and exploring options, receiving and interpreting data, and practicing decision-making. Many of the State Occupational Information Coordinating Units now have information available about training and educational opportunities. Such systems do not yet incorporate the diversity of learning opportunities present outside the formal educational sector but they could be expanded to do so. Such nontraditional adult learning possibilities could also be matched to learner preferences and characteristics as appropriate.

As an important step in these directions, Farmer (1977) has reported on INQUIRY centers in which computers are used to assist in the counseling of adults by providing "a comprehensive data bank of information on educational, leisure time, and occupational opportunities and by teaching problem solving processes and awareness of self as a decision maker" (p. 22). The underlying structure in INQUIRY centers is described as Guided Inquiry Counseling.

> The counselor allows the client to get in touch with the self, teaches the client problem-solving processes, and encourages the client to accept responsibility for decisions. The procedure is reflective at times, didactic at others. It is useful for personal problems as well as educational and career planning. (p. 126-127)

With regard to the counselor's role in life skills training as a part of adult learning, additional applications of computer technology still need to be developed and incorporated into programs for adult learners. However, prototype material is already available for such purposes. For example, the PLATO Dilemma Counseling System (DCS) teaches a generic method for solving life choice problems and counsels persons regarding their current psychological dilemmas. Essentially, the computer follows five sequenced and interrelated processes to engage the user in dilemma counseling: (1) formulating the original case problem as a psychological dilemma; (2)

formulating the extrication route for each dilemma component; (3) formulating the creative inquiry for each extrication route; (4) generating solutions for each creative inquiry; and (5) ranking and evaluating solutions. The components of this system contain 69 representative life-choice problems and over 400 specific and general solutions that assist users in solving their psychological dilemmas (Wagman & Kerber, 1980).

It seems apparent that a computer system modeled on the PLATO DCS could be developed to identify the elements of many concerns specific to adult learners, model the skills required to cope with the concern, and interact with the adult learner in providing simulation or behavior rehearsal of the concern at issue. Such a system might use videodisc or videocassette capability to portray such dilemmas or concerns and to model behavioral responses.

While much more could be said about computer-assisted approaches and, indeed, other forms of technology in support of counseling adult learners, suffice it to say that such tools need to be seen in combination with other elements of a planned program. Some sense of such a perspective is found in the research of Ironside and Jacobs (1977) who were commissioned by UNESCO to review the literature of the industrialized countries on the general topic of counseling and information services for adults engaged in learning. With regard to innovations in counseling and information delivery for adults, the authors contend that there are discernible trends in a few broad areas:

1. The use of person-centered noninstitutional settings in which to offer counseling and information services;
2. The more imaginative use of staff and increasing use of peers and non-specialist groups as staff resources;
3. The development of networks, human and mechanical, to aid the counseling information-giving transaction; and
4. The harnessing of many media and technologies in the service of learners. (p. 38)

CONCLUSION

It is unlikely that there is one ideal way to provide counseling and support programs for adult learners. The fundamental question is for which group of adult learners will a particular program be conceived? The answer to this question will significantly shape the services to be provided in any specific setting.

In broad terms, ideal counseling and support programs for adult learners will be active, if not proactive, in responding to a wide range of learner needs. They will reflect the fact that most adults have multidimensional needs for information, support, and skill development. Technology will be seen as a central aspect of the counseling and support program with computers playing a major role in facilitating information retrieval, simulations, and skill development. Counselors involved with adult learners will need to serve as brokers of learning opportunities, including learning packages; as personalizers of the learning experience; as guides to the decision-making process; as encouragers and supportive listeners; as trainers and models. They will need to understand the nature of adult transitions and the trigger events which stimulate adult learning as well as the ways by which to assess individual learning needs.

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COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELING AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR ADULT LEARNERS: CHALLENGE TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Ann Q. Lynch and Arthur W. Chickering

This paper takes a comprehensive approach to the characteristics associated with an "ideal" system of counseling and support programs for adult learners. This approach has led to a rather lengthy statement. The range of topics to be addressed is large indeed. We have tried to ameliorate this problem through clear organization so that each reader can actively select those sections most pertinent to his or her interests. Some persons may wish to read the paper as it is written. Others may wish to go directly to the last sections in "Implications" and come back selectively to the earlier conceptual material. Still others may wish to read some subsections and ignore the rest. However, we are dealing with an interdependent set of services; so in our view it is important to deal with all the interacting parts and leave the issue of emphasis and selection to each reader.

After some brief comments concerning the social context, Part One decribes "Adult Learners" and then shares key concepts concerning "Life Cycle Phases and Preventive Mental Health." Part Two, "Implications for Counseling and Support Programs," which begins on page 53, clusters programs in terms of "Entering, Supporting, and Culminating Services." The paper concludes with sections on the "Uses of Technology" and "Implications for Professional Development."

SOCIAL CONTEXT

The "greying" of America is not a transient phenomenon. An aging population, decreasing birth rate and declining pool of traditional college age students demand that higher education make significant changes to accommodate adult learners. At the same time we are becoming an "information society." These two forces create a growing need for lifelong learning. In addition, the diversity among college and

university students--in ethnicity, personality, lifestyle, preparation, goals, needs and values as well as age--has increased dramatically. The changing roles of women are creating new educational demands. Major changes in counseling and support programs must occur to respond to these social conditions and to serve our diverse constituencies.

But with declining financial resources and faltering public support, student development staffs have been level-funded or retrenched. Increased seniority, lack of mobility and low morale result. Changes must be made by modifying existing practices and through professional development activities with existing staff. Most important, we must think of our complex range of student services as an interrelated system which requires comprehensive modification.

General systems theory views a person as a complex individual operating within a system where concepts such as "sick" or "well" are irrelevant; symptoms developing among persons mean that the system must be modified because it has become dysfunctional. Nevitt Sanford wrote, "If an institution is a system of subsystems, and if a change in any one of them can change the whole, then it should be possible to make certain modifications in a college program which would reduce overall rates of mental illness among students or increase the overall level of their development" (1966, p. 49). If we are to build truly responsive learning systems, we need to strengthen our understanding of adult learners themselves and their interactions with our interdependent counseling and support programs.

PART ONE. ADULT LEARNERS

We define the adult learner as any person who has assumed the major roles and responsibilities of adulthood. Thus an adult learner is one who has achieved emotional and financial independence--or interdependence--in relation to parents. He or she is typically employed full- or part-time, is usually married and with children, and has civic or church responsibilities and avocational or recreational interests. Education is not the only, and often not the primary, concern. When family, work, or community demands intrude, education often takes a back seat. These learners, therefore, are very different from the single, full-time residential students for whom our traditional array of student services has been designed.

Adult Learner Characteristics

Cross (1981) summarizes numerous studies of adult learners. Practically all adults are "self-directed learners." Almost all adults pursue one or more intentional learning projects more than seven hours in duration each year. Approximately 30-35 percent of the adult population pursues some kind of organized instruction each year. Yet only 5-15 percent undertake studies for college credit. Most degree-seeking adults come from working class backgrounds and are first-generation college students. They tend to be better educated and hold better jobs than the general population. They are oriented to getting ahead, improving their income, lifestyle and status in the community. Participation by minority groups has been increasing significantly.

Why do adults pursue further learning? Primarily for pragmatic reasons. They want to learn (a) to do something better or to do something they could not do before, (b) to produce something, or (c) to obtain information or experience useful in making a decision (Tough, 1971). When adults take courses they do so for social relationships, for the opportunities to learn with others, to meet the external expectation of employers or others, to improve income or lifestyle, for professional advancement, to obtain stimulation or relief from situations, or because of a particular intellectual interest (Morstain & Smart, 1974).

What barriers do adults encounter? Carp, Peterson and Roelfs (1974) identified three categories of barriers: situational, institutional and dispositional. Situational barriers flow from real life conditions--lack of money and time, home and job responsibilities, needs for child care and transportation, no good place to study. Frequently friends and family are opposed because they do not see the need, have to make sacrifices themselves, or fear that the learner will find new ideas, new experiences and new persons which are more attractive. Institutional barriers arise from typical administrative, organizational, and educational practices--restricted class schedules; highly centralized classes, laboratories, library resources, faculty members and other resources; few courses relevant to pragmatic concerns related to job, family, community responsibilities, social, economic, or political issues; procedural red tape; inappropriate entry requirements. The time requirements for degree completion are extensive and often seem unrealistic given the high level of

knowledge and competence which may already have been achieved. Information about program alternatives and requirements is often inadequate or difficult to obtain. Dispositional barriers flow from the prior experiences and self-perceptions of the learner. "I'm too old to try to learn new things." "I may not have the energy or stamina to take on that extra work and stick with it." "I am not sure I really will enjoy studying." "I'm tired of school as a way to learn." "My goals aren't clear." "I don't want to seem too ambitious to my friends or relatives."

What do adults want to learn? Consistent with the pragmatic approach mentioned earlier, Penland (1977) found that "Practical Topics" were mentioned most frequently, by an overwhelming 76 percent. Next came "Intraself Topics," mentioned by 17 percent and finally "Formal Topics," mentioned by 7 percent. Our traditional academic disciplines are found primarily among the Formal and Intraself Topics and not among the Practical Topics. These data are consistent with current enrollment trends where the most severe problems are typically occurring in "Formal Topics" like history, foreign languages, English, mathematics, and the natural sciences.

How do adults want to learn? According to Tough (1971) almost three-fourths (73 percent) of adult learning projects are self-planned. Only 14 percent are planned with a group and only 10 percent are planned with a resource person. Only 17 percent of adult learners make use of a professional, either as a group leader or as an individual resource person. Adults tend to learn on their own instead of in courses principally because they can control the process and tailor it to their own needs and situation, according to Penland (1979). They can set their own pace, use their own learning style and approach, keep their learning strategy flexible, structure their own project, and learn what they want, without waiting for a class. They also often do not know of any class that is pertinent and do not have time for learning with a group.

When adults evaluated different approaches to learning, Tough (1971) found that contact with a resource person provided the best combination of amount of knowledge gained and sustained enthusiasm for learning. Self-planned and -executed projects, or those which provide a mixture of approaches, ran a close second. "Non-human" approaches--correspondence study and various types of mediated instruction without human contact--scored highest on amount of learning but lowest on enthusiasm. These findings are consistent with the heavy attrition and low completion

rates which characterize correspondence study and similar approaches. Of special relevance for teachers and student development professionals is the fact that group studies represented the worst combination in amount of knowledge acquired and enthusiasm for learning. These data concerning teaching methods are consistent with other findings. Cross's (1981) synthesis reports that 70-80 percent of adults, depending upon the study, preferred other than classroom lectures. Independent study in consultation with a teacher was most preferred. These findings are consistent with the concern for flexibility, setting one's own pace, using one's own learning style and structuring one's own project. The one-on-one combination was most highly valued. Lectures were preferred by another significant proportion, with on-the-job training and short-term workshops also preferred by substantial numbers.

In summary, the major qualities that differentiate adult learners from traditional college-age students seem to be these:

1. A wider range of individual differences, more sharply etched.
2. Multiple demands and responsibilities in terms of time, energy, emotions and roles.
3. More, and more varied, past experiences.
4. Rich array of ongoing experiences and responsibilities.
5. More concern for practical application, less patience with pure theory, less trust in abstractions.
6. Greater self-determination and acceptance of responsibility.
7. Greater need to cope with transitions and with existential issues of competence, emotions, autonomy, identity, relationships, purpose, and integrity.

Several theoretical areas can help us better understand adult development and the implications for serving adults. Developmental stage theory with the work of Loevinger, Kohlberg and Perry are powerful new areas of study. Adult learning styles using Kolb's Learning Style Inventory and psychological type using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator provide frameworks for exploring learning, teaching and counseling for adults. However, within the limits of this concept paper, in our judgment, adult differences and their implications can best be understood in the context of two different perspectives: (a) life cycle phases, and (b) a preventive mental health orientation.

LIFE CYCLE PHASES

Life cycle theories describe responses that people make to age and social expectations as they move through the different phases of adulthood. Adult life phases have been studied by theorists such as Havighurst (1972), Gould (1978), Levinson and others (1978), Lowenthal (1975), Neugarten (1968) and Schlossberg (1984). Life phase theorists see adulthood as a time in which change is continuous, interspersed with occasional stable interludes (Marineau & Chickering, 1982). Such theorists assign age boundaries and descriptive labels to each phase of the life cycle. Levinson and others (1978) stress the design of a person's life at a given time, emphasizing social roles in work and intimate relationships. Neugarten (1968) points out the significance of timing; crises that happen "on-time," like children leaving home or death of a spouse, are easier to manage than those that occur "out of sync." Theorists and practitioners alike have found age-linked periods useful in anticipating "marker events" or transitions that adults may encounter at certain points in their lives. Cross (1981) helps us recognize that age linkings are not prescriptive through her descriptions of life cycle phases, the associated psychic tests and characteristic stances.

Increased sophistication about adult development theory will help professionals design learning systems or environments responsive to adult learners. Every different theoretical lens provides opportunities for understanding the challenges facing the adult learner. Chickering's (1968) seven vectors of student development apply equally well to adult learners (Figure 1). Although many may have mastered some of the vectors at a younger age, most adults are still dealing with existential issues of achieving competence, managing emotions, developing autonomy and establishing new identities. They also seek freer interpersonal relationships, clearer purposes and greater integrity. These existential issues are the underlying forces driving many adults to seek higher education in order to create more meaningful lives.

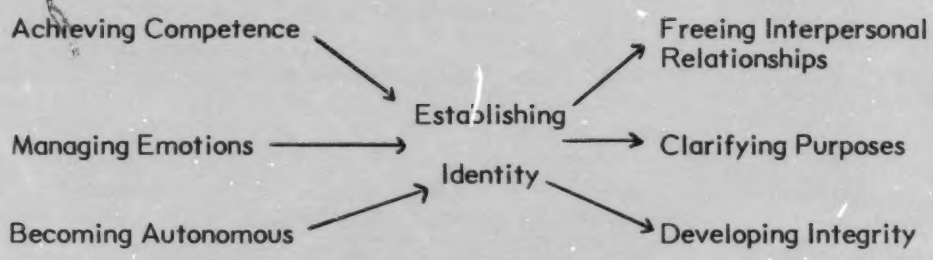

Figure I
Chickering's Seven Vectors of Student Development

PREVENTIVE MENTAL HEALTH

There will never be enough counselors to meet all the needs of the American population with a one-to-one treatment approach. Yet most college and university counseling centers, community mental health centers and professionals in private practice deliver services on an individual basis. Even the most adequately staffed college and university counseling center sees only 5-10 percent of the student body on an individual basis while the rest of students go essentially unserved. As long as present conditions of poverty, violence, stress, prejudice and alienation prevail in our society, individual counseling and psychotherapy will be needed for persons suffering from acute or chronic emotional disturbance. Yet most concerns of a psychological or an existential nature accompanying transitions and developmental tasks do not lead to severe emotional disturbance. These concerns can best be addressed through education and through changes in the environment--through prevention.

Prevention activities in mental health share the common objectives of (1) lowering the incidence of emotional disorders and (2) promoting conditions that reinforce positive mental health. Preventive mental health concentrates on promoting self-esteem, competence and coping skills. Chickering and Barger (1981) proposed the characteristics of a healthy person, a healthy environment and educational responses to those characteristics (Table I). Douvan (1981) described the capacity for intimacy as the hallmark of mentally healthy persons. She views higher education as the medium through which young, middle and older adults can improve their relationships and increase their capacity for intimacy.

Table I. Characteristics of Healthy Person - Healthy Environment and Educational Responses

Healthy Person	Healthy Environment	Educational Responses
1. Self-acceptance; valuing self and others	Recognition of and respect for individuals and individual differences	Individualized education; assessment of prior learning
2. Sense of self-determination, control, self-development	Meaningful achievement regarding personally important purposes	Orientation for goal and value clarification; self-assessment; diverse curricular and course alternatives; challenge to think and problem-solve
3. Clear and realistic perception of self and environment	Experimentation with varied roles and responsibilities	Varied learning tasks; extra-curricular activities; sponsored experiential learning
4. Openness to, understanding of, and ability to manage emotions	Supportive and energizing human relationships	Whole teacher to whole student; adult to adult; mentor, facilitator, resource person; peer relationships; collaborative projects
5. Capacity to understand, relate to and work with others	Time for assistance with reflection and introspection	One-to-one; support groups; reflective exercises; self-evaluation

Source: A. W. Chickering and B. Barger. Handout for the Higher Education for Adult Mental Health Summer Institute, Memphis State University, May (1981).

The Task Panel on Prevention of the President's Commission on Mental Health (1978) defined the essential characteristics of prevention as a network of strategies qualitatively different from the field's dominant approach.

1. Prevention is proactive, building adaptive strengths, coping resources and health.

2. Prevention is concerned about total populations, especially groups at high risk.
3. Prevention's main tools and models are those of education and social engineering.
4. Prevention assumes that equipping people with personal and environmental resources for coping is the best way to ward off maladaptive behavior.

If this orientation is adopted, it will identify our colleges and universities as caring institutions that do all they can to promote the strengths of all their members.

Albee (1980) proposed the following formula regarding the incidence of mental disorders:

$$\text{Incidence} = \frac{\text{Organic Factors} + \text{Stress}}{\text{Competence} + \text{Coping Skills} + \text{Self-Esteem} + \text{Support Groups}}$$

By increasing competence, coping skills, self-esteem and support groups we reduce the incidence of mental disorders which may be prompted by organic factors or stressful conditions.

PART TWO. IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELING AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The prevention approach means that counselors, psychologists and student development specialists need to become increasingly proactive rather than reactive. They should use their skills and experience to identify potentially vulnerable target subpopulations and design intervention strategies specifically for those groups. Those strategies would include programs to empower individuals for greater self-esteem, to build their strengths and confidence and to improve their competence and coping skills through education, social engineering and modeling. These professionals would develop support groups in which adult learners can develop a sense of belonging, exercise their sense of competence and identity, and develop integrity. These professionals would identify the environmental circumstances causing stress and find ways to eliminate or ameliorate that stress. Finally, they would train others to promote self-empowerment for all members of the learning community.

Student services have traditionally been organized along functional lines of orientation, counseling, residence life and student activities. Often there is little communication and minimal integration among these various services. Students bring complex problems but experience fragmented and compartmentalized responses. In recent years, the services for subpopulations, minorities, handicapped and international students, to name a few, have been integrated across functions to serve those special groups. We propose not another separate set of services for adult learners but a systemic structure which clusters programs for all learners. Different target populations will use the services in different ways. The boundaries between the subsystems of services must be permeable. Flexibility and responsiveness to learner needs should be the major criteria for measuring effectiveness. In our view, counseling and support programs include all the functions of student services powered by an increased emphasis upon developmental issues from a life cycle perspective and a prevention orientation.

We propose three clusters along a time sequence relevant to learners: (1) Entering Services--preadmissions, recruitment, admissions, financial aid, student employment, orientation, educational planning, developmental assessment, assessment of prior learning and registration; (2) Supporting Services--academic support services, career development, life and personal counseling, educational programming, recreational, athletic and cultural activities, health services and wellness programs, student government and organizations, residential life, child care, support groups, and developmental mentoring; (3) Culminating Services--academic program review and graduation assessment, job search, resume writing, interviewing and placement services, practica, internships and other experiential learning and developmental transcript review. Within each program area, life cycle differences among students will influence the differential delivery of services. The prevention approach will require a proactive stance, an emphasis on strengths and an educational orientation.

Figure 2 describes the time sequence of the three service areas. It portrays the overlap and interactions among them. Some of the services will only be needed for a short, intensive time, such as preadmissions, admissions, job search and placement services. Some services will occur periodically during the college experience, such as educational planning and registration. Other services may extend continuously through the college experience, like career development or recreational,

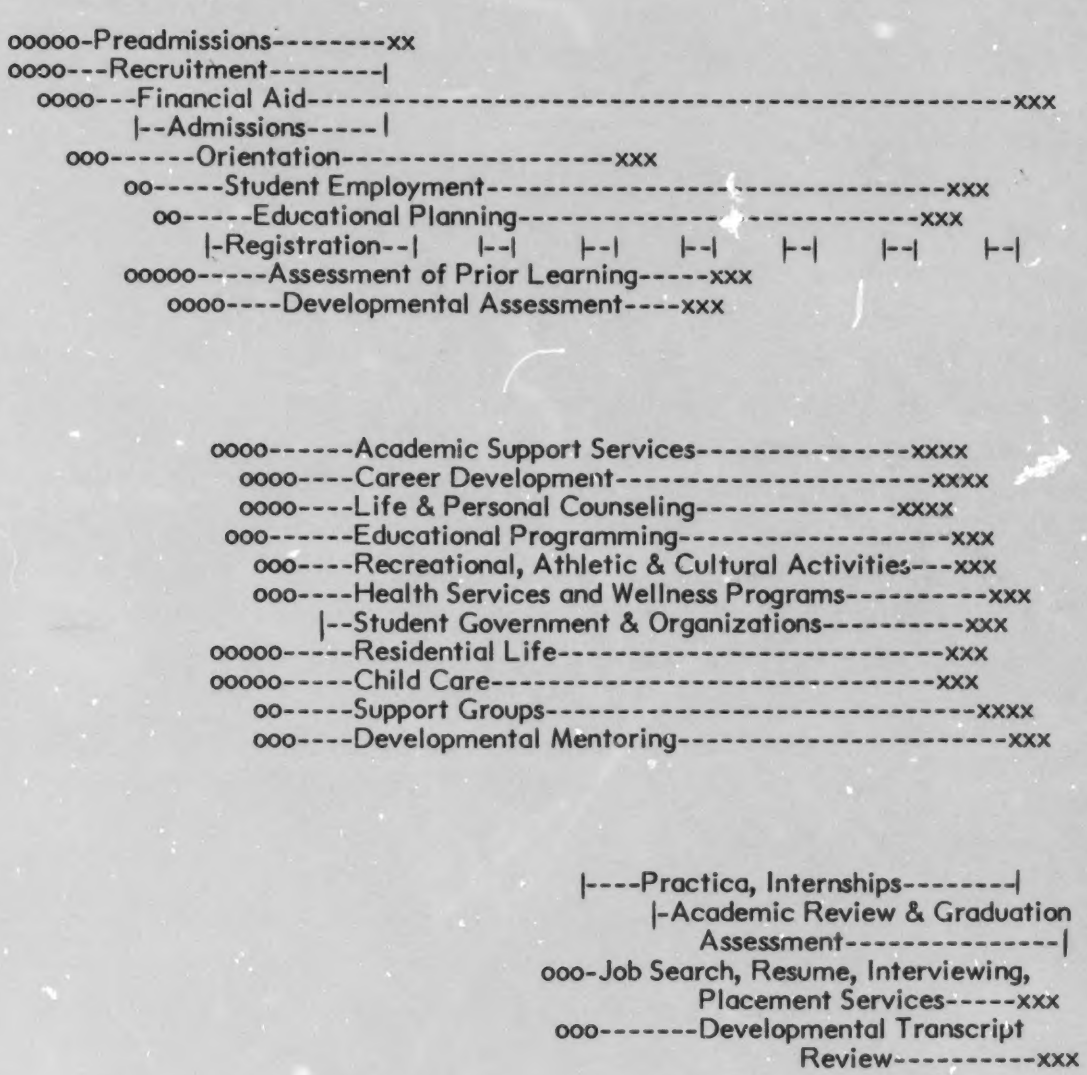

Figure 2. The Sequence of Services

Key:

ooo	preexisting services
---	major offering of services
xxx	follow-up services

athletic and cultural activities. Some services like personal counseling will be used intermittently depending upon specific individual needs. A service such as developmental assessment will change its focus to developmental mentoring and end in a review of the developmental transcript. Of course, not all services will be used by all students. But when services are viewed from a holistic perspective, educational planners and developmental mentors can more often identify the ways different services contribute to the goals of their students.

Some adult learners will be in and out of the institution depending upon external demands. They may need reorientation or at least a reacquaintance with their educational planner and their developmental mentor. The college experience for most learners usually extends from entrance into college through graduation, and on into graduate school and advanced degrees for those who go that route. Prior schooling, work experiences, family and community involvements constitute significant areas of learning for adults. Many of these experiences precede college and continue during and after college. Thus the college experience must be viewed in the context of lifelong learning.

As Figure 2 suggests, the three service clusters have some overlapping functions. Orientation workshops are part of Entering Services, but orientation may extend into the Supporting Services area, when orientation is viewed as an ongoing process or as part of an introductory course. Educational planning, beginning in an orientation workshop, is revised periodically throughout the college career. It is crucial that these services be viewed as a vital part of the academic learning system as well as subsystems of the larger learning system or community. The boundaries among the subsystems must be permeable, recognizing that learning takes place in the context of the individual's total life experience.

Entering Services

Each institution needs an Entry Center which helps learners decide whether to apply, manage necessary registration procedures and begin thinking about what they will do after they are admitted. These centers would include preadmission counseling, recruitment, admissions, financial aid, student employment, educational planning and academic advising, developmental assessment, assessment of prior learning and registration.

All students moving toward higher education need information about the learning system, the institution they aim to attend and the best ways to use it for their purposes. These needs are especially strong among adults from working class homes or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds where few parents, siblings or friends have attended college. Many admissions procedures, applications, and financial aid forms challenge experienced college-educated persons. Life cycle crises are often the triggers that propel many adults toward college. What they need upon initial contact is not more crises and anxiety, but easy access and welcoming support. Programs in the community where adults are already engaged--workshops in their work settings, churches, libraries or public schools; information booths in shopping centers and invitations through the media--can provide information and encourage prospective adult students to take the first step toward starting or resuming their higher education. Recruitment teams of young staff members and traditional-age college students have little appeal to older adults, reminding them of the age discrepancy and the unlikelihood of their being able to fit in. Instead, small teams of senior faculty, student development specialists and successful older adult students have more to offer potential adult students. This kind of recruitment team can empathize more readily with adult uncertainties and anxieties. Seminars which introduce eminent faculty to the community provide an occasion where interested adults can inquire about entrance or reentrance. Recruitment staff should accompany such programs when possible.

Admissions information which is attractive to adults--pictures that show diverse ages and lifestyles and easily readable, thoughtful, mature copy--helps create an institutional image that welcomes adults. Application questions about reasons for entering college can serve valid educational purposes. Questions might include: "What kind of life do you want to be leading five or ten years from now? What are your long range vocational and professional plans? What are your current responsibilities and obligations and which of these will be continuing? What resources for learning do you think would be helpful to you? Are there persons, places, instructional materials or other resources that you may wish to use in addition to those available here? What sequence of learning activities might you undertake to pursue your goals? How will you schedule your time? What current interests or commitments will you give up?" These questions ask adult learners to carefully consider the

significant time, money and effort they are about to invest. The questions may present problems for potential enrollees with limited verbal skills, who are embarrassed by their limitations and who have never thought seriously about themselves, their future, or their education in these terms. Such students may need help in thinking through these issues before they are admitted. But if that help and encouragement is not available and if that thinking does not occur, many will not find their way to the educational experiences they need (Chickering, 1973) or will find themselves overwhelmed by challenges they cannot handle.

Admissions decisions should rest primarily on judgments concerning the capacity of the institution to respond to the applicants' educational needs and purposes. Institutions that use high school grades and SAT scores for older adults, inappropriate petition policies, or admissions forms that require parents' signatures, make it evident that little thought has been given to adults. Articulation agreements that permit the easy transfer from community colleges to senior institutions help adults who begin their education close to home for financial, family or work reasons.

For many students financial aid means the difference between whether they can attend college or not. However, financial aid must be viewed in a broad perspective. Besides the usual grants, scholarships, loans and work-study positions, opportunities are needed for linking with employers in the community. Many adult students are already full-time employees and can enrich their companies by becoming better educated. Companies that offer tuition reimbursement plans can be encouraged to promote these benefits more openly. In order to receive financial support potential students can be encouraged to present educational plans and proposals to their employers. Financial aid staff can promote scholarships and grants with businesses and with civic organizations. Staff can influence the distribution of financial aid so that policies or practices which discriminate against part-time students can be changed. Student employment staff can work with local employers to link students with part- or full-time work that complements their educational goals and helps them financially. Although government loans have helped millions of students obtain higher education, these students are faced with significant indebtedness upon graduation. With more help in considering the potential benefits of working while attending college, more might opt for working.

Orientation workshops which help learners examine their needs, educational interests and life cycle issues will provide more substance than the usual orientation programs. Contact with faculty and staff is especially important. There is little that more effectively helps a student get started, identify with the institution or meet problems than a personal acquaintance with a faculty or staff member. Although some adult students may not be able to make arrangements for an overnight stay, the benefits to be derived from starting their college education with an intensive residential experience are great. They can learn about themselves, the institution, the faculty, the staff and resources for learning. They can also form a beginning support group with like-minded adventurers. These opportunities will help them identify strengths, overcome anxieties, clarify needed resources and increase their sense of being.

Since most adults pursue further learning for pragmatic reasons, educational planners and academic advisors must respond to these motives by translating the learner's specific goals into the practical aspects of various disciplines. During the orientation workshop, most students can set forth only short-term plans which knowledge and experience will later alter. Periodic review of educational plans in a continuing advising relationship will help learners modify and readjust their educational program.

Another Entry Service is an introductory course which covers many beginning needs of students new to the institution--orientation, educational planning, academic skills assessment, developmental assessment and an introduction to assessment of prior learning. A Life, Career and Educational Planning course can help learners identify their preferred learning style, clarify developmental tasks related to life cycle issues and plan career development activities. This course can introduce students to the institution's programs and services in a holistic fashion and provide a strong base for support groups and developmental mentoring.

Developmental assessment can become an important component of personal and professional growth for the adult learner. Developmental transcripts can help adults assess their life cycle phase and developmental task, career and professional goals, avocational interests, interpersonal skills, leadership abilities and personal values. Goal setting at the beginning of an academic career challenges learners to look for experiences outside the classroom that can expand horizons and opportuni-

ties for growth. Establishing goals, time lines and strategies and recording behavior can be positive experiences and contribute to the individual's sense of accomplishment, competency, self-sufficiency and internal control (Brown & De Coster, 1982). Using the developmental transcript as a repository for journal writings can encourage personal growth through increased value formation. Competencies gained through co-curricular programming or the transcript-mentoring system can also contribute to a learner's attractiveness in the eyes of future employers.

For many adults, the assessment of prior learning is the key to whether the institution values them as adults. Acknowledging the college-level learnings derived from their work and life experiences is equivalent to recognizing their worth as persons. Whether that learning was derived through business responsibilities, the military, volunteer work or intensive home study, the adult who can document the learning derived feels validated in his or her adulthood. When the institution takes this process seriously and provides easily understood procedures, learner affirmations are increased. The Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning (CAEL) has developed procedures and a principles of good practices statement (Willingham, 1977) that helps institutions implement this procedure. Special workshops or courses in which adults develop portfolios and learn the procedures can be very helpful. Although the credit to be derived is academic, compiling the portfolio can be developmentally a very affirming process. This process of assessing prior learning also provides another bridge between faculty and student development staff on behalf of the learner.

Registration at many institutions is still a nightmare of long lines and repeated trips to different offices. Nothing frustrates adults more than wasting valuable time in needless bureaucratic procedures. Registration should be as efficient as possible. Mail-in, phone-in or computer tie-in capabilities should be available to expedite this procedure.

Supporting Services

Many adults fear that they will not be able to do the academic work. Some of these fears are based on previous educational failures, some on the length of time their education was interrupted and some on myths about "rusty brains" or "old dogs." Some adults actually do lack writing, reading and computing skills. Academic

support programs or learning centers can offer programs that diagnose strengths and deficiencies and help build the necessary skills to begin college level work. With encouragement and hard work, practically all adults can overcome whatever learning handicaps they may have. It is helpful to have role models of other adult students to act as tutors and helpers in these centers. Such support may be the crucial element in whether the adult breaks through skill and anxiety barriers.

Career development should be a concern for adult students from early entrance throughout the college experience. Many adults undertake higher education with specific occupational goals yet do not know much about the qualifications needed, the characteristics of the work setting or the lifestyle generated by an occupation. Other adults are returning "to better their situation," and their vocational decision-making may be as unsophisticated as that of many young students. Still others may be satisfied with their work situation and plan only to use their added credential to advance within their occupation. Many may have ignored the other components of a career over a lifespan: the roles of parent, leisurite, citizen, and retiree, described by Super (1980). Career development specialists serving adults need information about life cycle issues to help in major career transitions and associated developmental tasks.

The expanding service sector in our society will result in demand for professionals in education, health, management, science, engineering and many other fields. The foundation of an advanced service economy is well-trained and well-educated persons, because the key to effective services is quality not quantity (Chickering, 1983). Helping adults learn how to deliver quality service entails education for empathy. Career development specialists can establish workshops that help students learn communication skills grounded in empathy. Here is where the boundaries among the classroom, career development, educational programming and personal counseling need to be permeable. Cooperation among the elements of the learning system will become the ultimate stance, rather than competitive empires.

Personal counseling programs will be needed by many adult students. Life cycle changes will challenge counselors to help adults through transitions. Development is in the movement. Crises are opportunities for change. Helping adults identify their strengths, build on them and view themselves as a part of a support group--a family, community, profession or interest group--shifts counseling from an

intrapsychic perspective to a prevention and systems approach. We look at the adult as a part of the system and seek ways to change the structure of the system, improve the interactions and reduce stress in the environment. We become proactive by developing educational programs, like "Building Self-Esteem," "Coping with Transitions" or "Developing Capacities for Intimacy and Autonomy." We use a systems approach in couples and family counseling where the emphasis is on the structure of the relationships, the communication behaviors and problem solving--not diagnosing, taking history, finding causes and attaching blame. We help establish support groups for specific target populations at risk: single parents, re-entry women, veterans, retirees. We help organize self-help programs for recovering alcoholics, recurring dieters, abuse victims, and the test anxious. We encourage wellness programs and the flow between the physical and mental health subsystems. Adult peer counselors can provide needed support through programs like "Warmline" to reach out to new adult students.

Recreational and athletic activities can help many adults rediscover competencies or acquire new ones that contribute to good health, longevity and lifelong recreational skills. Comprehensive health services that resemble a health maintenance organization serve not only the student but also the student's family, the faculty, staff and their families. Some institutions that are connected to medical schools and teaching hospitals may use this approach to provide exemplary health services on a health maintenance basis rather than on the traditional medical model. Institutions without this capability can act as a referral source for the local medical community. Feedback from students about such referrals is important. Is the physician/health professional aware of the student's needs? Does the professional respond in an appropriate and timely manner? Would the student recommend the professional to other students? Accountability among health care providers can be life-enhancing; accountability among student development professionals as referral sources can be the link to that enhancement.

Residential life may be viewed as appropriate only for full-time students of traditional age. Lest we forget, older adults do seek shelter in our residence halls. Although multigenerational living arrangements can simulate an extended family and much learning and sharing can occur, adults may prefer the privacy of suites or special quiet sections. Nevertheless, residence halls represent one of the best

laboratories for learning tolerance for differences and the meaning of a pluralistic society (Barger & Lynch, 1973).

Married students and single parents are often housed in villages separate from the campus. The villages provide opportunities for privacy, self-governance and educational programming to meet their special needs. Residence life staff who help develop a sense of community for these adults are contributing significantly to their retention and sense of belonging. However, the typical adult learner is a commuter who often comes to campus only to attend classes and use the library. Research (Chickering, 1974) has shown that students change more and learn more from each other in informal residential settings. Residence life staff can cooperate with faculty in establishing brief residential experiences for commuter students. Even though intensive and short-term, these experiences can provide an opportunity for adults to put aside their family and work responsibilities, concentrate fully on being a student and learn through sharing ideas with classmates and faculty. These short-term residential experiences might be planned in conjunction with specific courses or at periodic intervals throughout the college career.

Theatrical, musical, artistic and lecture programs can significantly enrich a liberal education. Adult students often hesitate to attend such programs because of babysitting problems and fatigue. The more faculty and staff help encourage attendance and participation, the more likely adult students are to recognize the importance of such activities to their total education.

Child care programs which are educative for the children and convenient for parents can help many adults, women especially, return to college. A few institutions do provide facilities for young children of students and staff. Where the institution cannot accept this responsibility, providing referral sources for student families new to the community is very helpful. Sponsoring cooperative babysitting may become a service of the local campus ministerial group or a program of the adult student association. Student development staff can help initiate this much needed service.

Adult students often leave student government to the younger students. Recently, however, a growing consumer-mindedness reminds them that they have a stake in the activity fee funds controlled by student government. In a few institutions, adult student associations have emerged to support programming of a social,

recreational and educational nature and advocacy for adult student concerns. Student development specialists are in the best position to promote the creation of such organizations. Other adult students may prefer to affiliate with student or civic associations that are closely identified with their professional interests. Again, linking adult learners to groups within the community is a way to expand and reinforce the comprehensive learning system approach.

The developmental transcript mentor can help students plan a coherent use of other parts of the learning system aside from just the classroom. By assessing professional and personal goals on entry, the mentor and the learner can plan a sequence of activities which will contribute to achieving those goals. In assessing prior learning, some learnings may contribute to the academic transcript and some to the developmental transcript. Throughout the college experience, mentor and learner can consider how extracurricular activities may contribute to learning about intraself topics. Career development activities such as assessing career interests and strengths, exploring careers by computer or library search, interviewing professionals in one's prospective career area, volunteering in a related agency and designing a practicum in an area of interest can all contribute to the learner's professional development. Personal goals of improving relationships can be reached through residential life experiences, individual counseling, self-help groups and educational programs such as assertiveness training or couples enrichment. Student government, adult student associations and campus professional organizations offer opportunities to develop leadership skills. The community itself offers a broad base of councils, boards, agencies and organizations in which adult learners may become involved for citizenship and leadership projects. Reporting these experiences in a developmental transcript can enrich documentation of activities and associated competencies. Thus developmental mentors can help students be more intentional about the use of non-formal activities in the service of their long-range objectives. Since adults are self-directed learners, often all they need is a gentle reminder of the total learning environment to be used for their own professional and personal goals. The mentor can provide challenge and support as the learner moves through developmental tasks and stages (Thomas, Murrell, & Chickering, 1982).

Culminating Services

Academic program review and graduation assessment can be an opportunity to examine the significance of the adult learner's educational program. Continuity of contact with the academic advisor and the developmental transcript mentor throughout the academic career is sustaining to the adult learner. Periodic reviews are important, but a collective look at the meaning of the educational experience prior to graduation can be both gratifying and illuminating.

The whole job-search, resume-writing and interviewing process can be a positively reinforcing experience for the adult student. The positive value of adults having more, and more varied, experiences needs to be pointed out to employers. Another area in which adults have an advantage is in practica, internship and field experiences. Often the adult's current employment situation can serve as the training site of that experience and, with increased supervision, can take on added significance for the employer and for the student. Videotaping role playing situations to handle especially difficult questions can be the focus of workshops on interviewing skills for adult students.

Finally, the developmental transcript serves as a way for adult learners to document their personal and professional growth. It can serve as an important adjunct to the academic transcript. With their mentor, adult learners may find it useful to review their descriptions of participation in cocurricular programs and groups, community activities and volunteer experiences. Documentation of the learning derived from such activities can be helpful to future credentialing and employment.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

From an industrial society to an information society, we are moving into a new age of technology which can have revolutionary impact on colleges and universities. How we use this technology will make the difference between whether we respond reactively or proactively to these changes. If we can use the technology to improve access, decrease time and costs, and increase flexibility for students, it will serve us well. Many kinds of technologies are available: telephone, television, cable, satel-

lites, computers, electronic mail, videotapes, cassettes and videodiscs. The changes are happening exponentially. What we see today will be "old hat" in three to five years. Some programs are already in place in some institutions, and many more are being developed. Therefore, we would like to look at two types of technology, computer and cable, and apply them to counseling and support programs to serve adult learners more effectively.

Undoubtedly, the computer has the greatest potential for changing higher education, for both the classroom and student development services. Not only does the computer make it possible to simplify record-keeping from entrance to graduation, make schedules and room assignments, and coordinate budgets and personnel, it enhances the capabilities of providing the latest information in multiple formats. Individualized education, long the dream of educators, can become a reality. Independence, self-sufficiency and autonomy are fostered by individualized education. Responsiveness to special learning needs will help higher education tailor programs relevant to the individual adult learner. Home computers provide opportunities for distant learners to tie into the institutional computer and transmit data to a bank for storage to be called up at the convenience of the professor, the staff person or the learner. Having a home computer also allows for self-paced learning to sharpen academic skills and to learn at the convenience of the learner. No doubt computers will become available in shopping malls, in businesses and in centralized and decentralized locations on campus for persons who do not have home computers and for greater convenience.

Each of the student service cluster areas can use computer technology. For Entry Services, application form information can be supplied by the student on the personal computer and transferred by modem to the institution. The student can supply brief data and answer at leisure and with thoughtfulness the questions posed in considering long-range plans. Admissions counselors can review the information before students come to campus for orientation workshops. Students who need help with descriptive questions may want to make contact by phone or in person before completing the application form. Assessment of student abilities, interests, developmental level and values will be greatly facilitated through software programs being developed.

For Supporting Services, students who are having academic skill difficulty can use interactive software packages to improve their writing, spelling, reading comprehension and speed and computational skills. These programs can be used at home or in a learning skills lab with an adult student tutor. Computers provide easy record-keeping and can help in educational planning by illustrating how different academic programs fit with different interests and abilities of the student. Each term educational planners and students can have available printouts of courses completed and projections for future terms. Registration and graduation assessment can easily be improved through computer programs already in place. Flexible scheduling, of great importance to the adult learner, can be greatly enhanced by the multiple options provided by the computer.

Currently, beginning programs in career development, like DISCOVER, help students consider more alternatives than most career counselors could provide in many hours. Self-help programs like PLATO DSC to be used at home or on campus are being developed to enhance self-esteem, competence, and skills in communication and personal problem solving. The assessment of prior learning will be able to be computerized; a beginning has been made with the adult version of DISCOVER. Compiling an assessment portfolio will be greatly facilitated by integrated software including the word processor and information retrieval from other data banks. Directories of various services and programs at the institution and in the community will be readily available through a call-up through the student development office and through home computers. Directories of students and faculty with common interests will make forming support groups and matching mentors more feasible. These approaches can increase retention and give a sense of belonging to isolated learners. Developmental transcripts can more easily be compiled and reviewed in Culminating Services by learners and mentors using a computer.

Cable television using videotapes and videodiscs will reach adult learners who are at a distance as well as those who are in the community, at home, in business settings or on campus. Preadmission information can be presented easily from a variety of institutions, which will enable adults to contrast and compare different offerings in terms of their needs. Cable already allows students to complete academic courses at home such as those offered by the National University Consor-

tium. Educational programs such as time management, study skills and relaxation techniques can help students learn more skills and identify further resources. Students can then communicate with their professors or staff members by electronic mail, by telephone or in person. Cable also allows a daily listing of activities, times and places both on campus and in the community. Cable will enable programs on financial aid, student employment, health education and various other services to be readily accessible to learners and provide information of a basic nature to a wider variety of persons seeking services.

Perhaps most important is the ideal that technology will provide the linking of resources to serve all students more effectively. Those resources may be on campus in the form of faculty, staff or library; or they may be in the community, at a distant library or professional association; or they may be a group of learners who have similar interests. The possibilities for expansion of a learning system appear infinite.

NEW ROLES FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT SPECIALISTS

The prevention orientation to services requires that student development specialists adopt new roles. The biggest change for most counselors will be moving to a proactive stance. No longer will we wait in our offices for students to come to us. We will be actively assessing the environment, creating new programs, managing resources and taking an advocate position to help empower learners toward their own goals. Our roles could be conceptualized as follows:

Ecology Manager/Consultant

- -Assessor of environmental stresses, challenges and supports
- -Maintainer of a developmentally powerful environment
- -Consultant to faculty, campus, community agency personnel and business trainers

Resource Person

- -Source of information about the institutions, their programs and alternatives and the community at large
- -Broker of information, resources and activities
- -Linker of resources
- -Coordinator of faculty mentor programs

Mentor/Educator

-Developmental transcript assessor, mentor and reviewer with the learner
-Assessor of prior learning in conjunction with faculty and the learner
-Researcher of student characteristics and needs
-Teacher of life cycle and human development theory for students, faculty and staff
-Creator of educational programs

Facilitator/Counselor

-Enabler for peer learning networks
-Initiator for support groups
-Facilitator for self-help learning
-Cohort developer
-Counselor/referral source for students with chronic emotional disturbance
-Trainer/supervisor for adult peer advisors and counselors

Advocate

-Advocate for groups at risk
-Mediator between student needs and institutional requirements
-Breaker of barriers
-Fighter against prejudice and discrimination
-Modeler of change

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This paper recognizes that a paradigm shift in higher education driven by the increasing diversity of learners represents a great challenge to student development specialists. New theories and research call for increased knowledge and skills regarding adult learners. New roles require different kinds of professional development for current staff. Professional preparation programs must be infused with new developmental theory, research and practices to prepare beginning professionals for their new roles.

Each of the new roles for student development specialists requires that new skills be learned. For example, the role of consultant mandates that consultation skills be taught. Although consultation uses many of the same communication skills as counseling, the focus shifts from the client to the consultee. Cooperative assistance is provided by one professional with specialized skills and knowledge, the con-

ance is provided by one professional with specialized skills and knowledge, the consultant, helping another professional who is expert in his or her discipline or setting, for example, a faculty member. The relationships are egalitarian and nonevaluative. Training in consultation involves learning about different models, phases, skills and intervention modes. Very few preparation programs offer training in consultation from a preventive mental health orientation. In our educator role and with human development becoming the unifying theme in higher education, we need to become well grounded in theories concerning life phases, ego, intellectual, moral and ethical development, adult learning styles, psychological types and the new technologies. Preparation programs and our professional associations must help us acquire the knowledge and skills needed for these new roles and stances.

Using the prevention orientation, we will become proactive, identify populations at risk, focus on strengths and use education and social engineering to effect change. The prevention orientation does require a major shift in our frame of reference and perhaps in our belief system. Although we must always continue to respect the dignity of the individual, we must not be held back by our training which taught us only to work with individuals or small groups. From a counseling focus on the individual to a systems perspective with a focus on target populations, we need to become more visible in the service of a broader base of our constituents. We must also recognize the ability of self-help groups to empower individuals, as well as the strengths of self-directed adults. It is true in terms of the mental health formula that this new stance will call for us to develop new competencies, new coping skills and new support networks while dealing with some increase in personal and professional stress. But in the long run we will be serving more learners more effectively.

In our role as changer of systems, we recognize that a change in any subsystem will effect change in other subsystems and in the system as a whole. We must serve as modelers for that change. The more effectively we cope with change, the better we are at modeling that for our learners and our colleagues. These changes do not require a complete revolution, but rather an act of will, backed by initiative and

support from administrators and constituents in recognizing that change itself is inevitable and a part of the developmental process.

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SYNTHESIS AND A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

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Studying the literature on adult learning leaves the reader alternately excited and perplexed--excited about the challenging and provocative ideas, perplexed over the differing viewpoints of the authors and how best to begin the process of needed change. This chapter is intended, first, to synthesize and bring together the major concepts presented in the foregoing papers, and second, to suggest a futures agenda for both human services professionals and adult learners. In approaching this task, we're not interested so much in bringing discrete closure to the exciting dialogue to which we were treated as in developing a narrower focus for our attention and pinpointing the areas that can engage us profitably in future discussions and developmental work.

MAJOR CONCEPTS AND IDEAS

Listed below are the significant ideas that emerged from the stimulating, day-long discussions among the authors.

o It is extremely difficult if not impossible to define the term "adult" precisely. Adults are an enormously diverse and heterogeneous group, and any attempt to classify them does an injustice to the breadth of their interests, needs, and concerns and to their inherent variability. Adults may clearly be better known by their standard deviation than by their mean.

o Higher education as it is now organized and delivered is frequently more of a hindrance than a help to the educational needs of many adults. Bureaucratic demands and rigidities that call for prescribed behaviors and limit the range of learning options available to adults frequently are more the problem for adult learners than their personal difficulties with learning tasks. For many adults the route for continuing learning and self-renewal is outside the walls of formal academia. The more prestigious educational institutions, in particular, demand that

adult learners bend and respond to traditional rules rather than attempt to alter the structure to respond more appropriately to the needs and interests of adult learners.

o There is a new emphasis in business on giving more attention to individuals. Business is becoming more acknowledging of the importance of involving people in all phases of production and enlisting them as active contributors to all tasks rather than as passive recipients of orders and directions. This new understanding of the importance of the human element in both management and production offers an important lesson to higher education. Many of the ideas present in this new paradigm shift or way of thinking about human activity have long been present in guidance literature and services. Basic to this paradigm shift is recognition of the need to consider the total person and to be responsive to the attitudinal and feeling spheres of each person as well as to the intellectual and cognitive.

o Counselors and student services specialists are in an excellent position to assume leadership in adult learning. They can become catalysts for individualized education and assist in the design and the delivery of education which is both information-rich and responsive to individual needs and interests.

o We need to reconceptualize and build student services that are more specifically attuned to the needs and interests of adult learners at different phases in their education. In particular, we may need to restructure the services that we provide for adult learners into three major categories: (a) services that adult learners need at the beginning of their learning experiences, or entering services; (b) services that adults need while they are experiencing the myriad formal and informal activities involved in the educational process, or supporting services; and (c) services necessary for completing organized educational experiences and planning for further education or work, or culminating services. Student services, as they are now organized and delivered, are too broad and generic to meet the specific needs of learners at critical junctures in their education.

o It is essential that we view the whole environment that adults walk into when they begin their education. We need to think of the adult as a learner in process and to realize that the learner is both the object and the instrument of learning. We should consider the entire educational experience as a system, and study how the different components of that system interact with one another. To tinker with one part of the whole and ignore the consequences of change on both the

change target and the other components in the system makes the effort to bring about significant change futile and runs the risk of destroying the system's present level of effectiveness. While narrowly defined targets of change may have simplistic appeal, the long-term consequences of approaching change piecemeal, without consideration of the ripple effects within the system, are predominantly negative.

o We need to be concerned about the appropriate role of technology in higher education. With our Babbitt-like fascination for educational gadgets and our frequently all-too-willing subservience to what seems to be scientific and mechanical magic, we may unwittingly contribute to adult enslavement rather than liberation. Woe be to us if we substitute technological inflexibility for our current bureaucratic rigidities. Too much of our attention in educational technology has been devoted to its marvels and miracles and not enough to human interactions with technology and now we can maximize significant learnings while minimizing technology's negative effects.

o Student services, as they are now experienced by many learners, are so fragmented that the sense of caring is lost. Students have to label themselves or put themselves into categories in order to receive assistance. And the categories frequently don't fit. Hence, many adult learners feel that they have to play roles that denigrate them and that higher education is far from the potentially liberating and unleashing experience that they thought it would be.

o We need innovative grand designs for adult learning--something other than tinkering with and revising the old. A reasonable way to proceed might be to envision the future and then work backwards to revise and update our programs and services so that they will lead to our images of the future. We acknowledge, however, that change usually occurs incrementally, over time, and that we cannot expect all institutions to change either rapidly or in consort with other institutions. Our most appropriate goal here may be to assist some institutions to advance to the cutting edge of new services, illustrating for others the payoffs and trade-offs for bold and adventuresome excursions into new ways of offering services for adult learners.

o Stressing life chances is particularly crucial in working with adult learners. Pointing out the possibilities and the options that exist generally and at significant transition points can be a major contribution of counselors and human services

specialists. Many individuals go through life unaware of the many avenues open to them. Opportunities unknown are possibilities unrealized. It is a priority of major importance that early and continual identification be made of what can be for each person at any age.

o Involving educators and faculty in efforts to restructure adult education and services should be one of our major goals. The process by which adults learn should reflect the outcomes that we anticipate will accrue from the learning and the ways adults will use what they have learned. Compartmentalized and rigidly conceived education does not answer the adult learner's needs. Faculty are likely to be far more receptive to changing their role and contributions if we can provide them with handles for change, with clear targets for where change needs to be made and ways they can bring about that change. Change in adult education is not the sole province of administrators or decision makers; rather, it is the responsibility of all who are involved in determining what education should be and how it should be presented.

o Adult learners frequently experience a disjointedness in their education. Gaps in time and setting and the ways in which courses are taught may vary enormously. Unlike many younger students, more used to schedules and rules, adults may feel alienated and frustrated by the obstacles they encounter. Counselors can provide needed support for adult learners and provide a "connectedness" in their learning experiences. Both by their own persons and their ability to help adults connect with other adults through networks, they may serve as the glue that binds disparate educational learning experiences into a strong and significant whole.

o Breadth of perspective is particularly important. We have consistently tried to view the adult as a separate individual being, frequently stressing each person's uniqueness and individuality more than the commonness and the similarities among adults. It is important in designing services for adult learners that we adopt a broad view of the context in which adults learn and grow, giving appropriate considerations to sociological, economic, and anthropological factors. The individual is not only contributive to his/her community but is also a product of and highly influenced by it. Knowledge of adult psychology helps us to understand the separate adult, but knowledge of adult sociology will enhance our understanding of how and why adults learn from and interact with one another.

NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

In reviewing the compelling thoughts presented by the writers, a number of major challenges, questions, and thoughts emerge. In our judgment, and with the notion that change is imperative, there seems to be a critical need to identify the specific activities that counselors and student services specialists might undertake to be of more assistance to adult learners. If left in the nonspecific terminology of "what everyone should do," our experience would suggest that no one will take responsibility. Therefore, we have targeted our recommendations specifically for counselor and student services specialists, though in fact the implications of these recommendations are as important for adult educators and administrators as they are for persons in the helping professions. The process of developing these ideas was challenging and highly interactive, and we offer them herewith not only to build upon the information already presented but to encourage sharpened dialogue and discussion among those of you who read them.

1. Balance Between Learner and Environment

An institutional balance sheet from the perspective of the learner is much more red than black. Who hasn't read a college catalogue that didn't runneth over with silly regulations, rigidities, and requirements that seemed to impede rather than facilitate learning? Institutions are easily seen as being allied against rather than for learners. A clear role for human services specialists is to intervene to make institutions more humane and more responsive to their central mission: helping students learn. An equally important role, however, in our belief, is to help students individually and collectively understand and accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world, that overcoming barriers, managing stresses and presses, and being able to solve situational problems successfully are coping skills they must acquire. In the simplest terms this may be called learning how to "beat the system." More accurately, it may be described as knowing how best to use the system, i.e., the people and the resources within it, to achieve important individual goals. We may unwittingly do learners a great disservice if we encourage them always to blame the institution for any or all of their problems in learning and achievement. Better that they accept the institution, warts and all, and maximize for themselves the potentials inherent in that environment and its capacity to teach them.

Society demands that individuals give up some of their own freedom of action for the presumed good of all. In their establishment, some rules and regulations frequently distort the original intent of serving the best interests of the largest number of learners, or may even be maliciously conceived to serve the interests of some more than others. Be that as it may, we must help adult learners to be aware of the folly of tilting at academic windmills to the extent that it inhibits their accomplishing their central mission--getting on with the task of learning. Conversely, helping professionals must turn curricular cracks and regulatory wrinkles that impede learning and personal growth and development into prime targets for active change efforts. They must display the same vigor and personal commitment to bringing about change in their institution as they do to aiding individuals to change and grow. Parenthetically, counselors themselves may be unwitting contributors to the web of academic entanglements by their own proliferation of nonfunctional rules and procedures. Balance is the key. The fully contributing counselor displays as active an effort toward acquainting the institution with its absurdities as he or she does toward helping the individual student grapple with and overcome those absurdities.

2. Resistance Toward Classification

Our current methods of assessment and classification typically speak more to a person's past level of performance than to future potential. Many of the adults that we deal with may be first-class people who, through force of circumstance, have led second-class lives. Many may have been unaware of or unable to respond in any meaningful way to an array of promising life choices. For administrative ease we slip into classifying students in ways that emphasize their commonness while masking their unique and individual talents, e.g., "adult student," "first-year student," "sophomore," "master's candidate," "class of 85." Perhaps we need not a class of '85 but a class of unlimited choices and possibilities. We must not be blinded to the wide range of knowledge and experience that exists within a group of students, all of whom carry the same classification. Imagine, for example, a group of first-year graduate students that includes a retired Army colonel familiar with a dozen different cultures, a mother who has successfully raised six children by herself, a 21-year-old who is a child of the technological age and is more comfortable with

chips than with cookies, a competent woman executive launched on a new career, and a senior citizen who only now has time to pursue graduate study. The great intra-differences (within the person) and inter-differences (between one adult and another) are such that the term "adult" for purposes of counseling is more deceiving than informing. The challenge is to be able to respond to adults as individuals, acknowledging their experiences and wisdom while helping them to build a future that is both cognizant of and responsive to their unique talents and potentials.

3. Bridging Behaviorism and Cognition

A potentially very useful and exciting new counseling emphasis focuses on the thinking and cognitive processes used by different individuals in their planning and decision-making. Many human services specialists counsel primarily from a behavioral standpoint, assisting people to adopt behaviors which will be most helpful in typical situations, e.g., overcoming anxiety, talking before a group, improving study skills. Because the thinking that a person employs in arriving at a decision or taking an action can only be inferred, we have accepted an approach to counseling that generally emphasizes a specific behavior more than the thinking behind the behavior or the individual's style of learning. Advances in cognitive psychology and the work of specific researchers such as Krumboltz (1983) offer new opportunities for us to help clients understand their basic thinking processes and learning style and ways they can improve upon the thinking and planning inherent in their behavior. This bridging of behavioral with cognitive approaches seems particularly suitable for adults who by their very nature are likely to be more knowledgeable about life events and more thoughtful about their actions. Learning style inventories can be a useful reference point for discussion about how a given person approaches learning tasks and can help them learn to learn more efficiently.

4. Facilitating Creative Choice

An implicit danger in much of our counseling is that we are "one answer" specialists, i.e., looking for the right career, the best decision, or the most appropriate resolution of a problem. Singularity of responses has predominated. More recently there is a new appreciation of our transformation into a pluralistic society wherein multiple careers, life styles, and life choices are the norm rather than the

exception. In such a world it is incumbent upon the counselor to be comfortable in encouraging divergent as well as convergent thinking by clients. We need to help adults become aware of the multiple options available to them in almost all situations and consider a full range of choices rather than make a premature selection of the choice. For most adults a harmonious admixture of career, education, leisure, and personal relationships is the preferred life style. Counselors familiar with holistic and right- and left-brain influences on life functioning may be particularly adept at helping each client to fashion a creative blend of roles, relationships, and activities that are particularly suited to that person.

5. Adults as Resources for Adults

In his analysis of intentional change, Tough (1982) was impressed by the extent to which adults were successful in bringing about intentional change in their lives and the wide range of strategies and resources they utilized in making such change. In the process, professional counseling assistance was notable more by its absence than by its presence. What emerges through an analysis of the work of Tough and others is the important role that adults play in helping other adults make important life choices and changes. As previously mentioned, any adult group possesses an enormous range of experience and knowledge that can be helpful to other adults who are in the throes of personal decision-making. The counselor role here would most clearly be that of broker of resources for adult learning and development.

Human services professionals can make significant contributions to adults by suggesting available human or physical resources to aid them in grappling with problems or making decisions that do not require the direct therapeutic intervention of the counselor. Though akin to Miller's (1969) concept of "giving psychology away," the brokering role goes beyond it, in that the counselor must be extremely knowledgeable about the range and quality of resources available and possess the capacity to customize the resource to the needs of a given person. Like a good stock broker, the adult resource broker needs to know when to be bullish, i.e., to offer direct information and recommendations, and when to be bearish, i.e., to assist the client more indirectly in the process of discovery. Of particular use to the adult resource broker today is the plethora of self-management and self-growth resources which minimize the need for outside assistance and professional intervention. Net-

works, mentors, and support groups have also demonstrated their great utility in helping people cope with difficult times and adopt more functional behaviors. As previously discussed, technology can also be very useful to a counselor in carrying out the brokering role.

6. Contributions of Technology

Technology is playing and will play a key role in counseling services for adult learners. All of the authors have suggested that technology is highly important but have warned against an uncritical acceptance of it. We are left with an enticing picture of what it can do for us but a wariness about its effects. Like sampling a soft drink with a new artificial sweetener to satisfy our thirst, we are reluctant to do more than sip before we are sure what will happen if we gulp. We can use technology well only if we are clear in our minds regarding its major contributions and then design programs that utilize these assets. Below we have listed some of the major advantages of technology in guidance.

A. Improved storage and retrieval of information. Technology has a great capacity for storing and retrieving accurate and relevant information, an extremely useful and significant contribution to counseling. Many adults have expressed the desire to obtain broad-ranging, up-to-date information and to have someone help them interpret the information as it applies to themselves. The enormous capacity of the computer for maintaining files and its ability to retrieve selectively that which is pertinent to the needs and questions of a given individual is of enormous advantage to the adult counselor. If technology were helpful in no other way, it would make a significant contribution to the quality of counseling by its capability in this area.

B. Individualized attention at the user's demand. More so than with traditional students, adult learners need attention and assistance at times when they themselves are available. Computer consoles with 24-hour availability are at least as useful to adult learners as 24-hour banking facilities. The commitments and involvements of adults are such that the availability of the computer to respond when and how they need it is of tremendous appeal. Like a quiescent genie available for support and assistance at the command of its master, the computer can provide not only objective and fast assistance when it is needed but also a sense of security to the individual adult that some thing out there is always waiting and available, and cares.

C. **Capacity for interaction.** The present reality and future promise of computer-assisted counseling is the opportunity it provides for meaningful interaction regarding the options, choices, and plans of the user. This interactive process stimulates the user to consider the outcomes of one choice as compared with another and to give special attention to the values that are inherent in different decisions. Future computer-assisted adult guidance programs using videodisk technology will greatly expand opportunities for this type of interaction.

D. **Remote access.** At present the use of technology by adult learners is primarily confined to centralized locations. Even as this is being written, opportunities are expanding greatly for individuals to access information from remote locations, and the day is not far off when individuals will be able to engage in interactive counseling sessions from the privacy and convenience of their own homes. While valuable to everyone, this remote capability is likely to be particularly important to adults who find the onus of having to adjust their schedules to the availability of institutional services particularly irksome.

E. **Skill-building potential.** Recent research has suggested that computers are ideally suited for assisting users to develop skills because (a) they provide opportunities for dialogue which promotes understanding, and (b) they offer activities of graduated complexity that build skills. In developing the life skills essential to the adult's armamentarium for coping with an imperfect and barrier-strewn world, the opportunity to enhance competencies in specific areas such as decision-making, stress and anger management, assertiveness, and/or time management is of crucial importance. Traditional counseling has fallen short in that its focus has been predominantly on information and attitudes to the detriment of skill development and practice. Computer-assisted counseling can help to fill that void.

F. **Creation of community of learners.** Electronically linking persons who are separated by geography and time but who share common interests and needs is an exciting use of computers. Imagine a dozen adults with conflicting schedules scattered about a city, engaging at a time convenient to themselves in a computer conference regarding problems associated with single parenting or studying a particularly difficult subject, or simply offering support to one another at different points in their learning. At various times members of the electronically-formed community might invite selected friends to join them at their console to share their

insights and feelings regarding the discussion. Loneliness and isolation, twin perils of the adult learner, may be minimized through this electronically-facilitated sense of community. These learning communities may increase in sophistication and range of possible resources as their geography extends and their membership increases.

G. Awareness of how we learn. Each of us has a characteristic style of learning and approach to both simple and complex learning tasks. Typically, we are unaware of both how we go about learning and what we can do to improve our learning effectiveness. Computer-assisted adult guidance, like that in the adult version of DISCOVER, offers new opportunities for users to understand their basic orientation to learning and to work at improving specific aspects of how they learn, e.g., how they process information, what mode of learning is most effective for them personally, how they make critical decisions. Perhaps the greatest contribution that adult counseling can provide to lifelong learners in a learning society is to improve the efficacy of the lifelong process of learning and renewing in which we are all engaged.

H. A catalyst for restructuring counseling. Physical scientists report that the computer not only enables them to do their work more efficiently but also helps them to identify gaps and weaknesses in their theories and concepts. Computers will not only make much of our counseling more effective, e.g., quickly retrieve a wealth of information on selected topics, but, more important, can help us to reshape our thinking as to what counseling is and how best to do it. In its simplest form, computer-assisted instruction is no more than electronic page-turning. Because artificial intelligence is no substitute for human intelligence, computer-assisted counseling which aims to do no more than mimic a human counselor will likely fail. The real potential for the computer in counseling is to move beyond present methods of counseling by assisting users to simulate more meaningfully the world which they will enter and to make plans and choose actions that will be of most benefit to them.

CONCLUSION

The opportunity to read these papers and to observe the subsequent videotaping of the discussions among the authors broadened our perspective and stimulated our thinking. We came away more knowledgeable, hopefully more insightful, but assuredly emboldened. While yet not totally sure as to exactly what should be done to facilitate adult learning or the exact nature of how it can be done, we are convinced that human service specialists can do much to aid in the process. We have emerged from this experience renewed in our desire to enjoin the task of promoting adult learning. We hope that you, as a reader, are better informed by having spent time with this volume, but most of all, are excited about the opportunities that exist for enhancing the adult experience--for helping adults learn more about themselves, about how they learn, and about making their lives as rewarding and satisfying as possible.

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